

COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XIX.—No. 486.

[REGISTERED AT THE
G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]

SATURDAY, APRIL 28th 1906.

[PRICE SIXPENCE.
BY POST, 6½d.]



H. WALTER BARNETT.

LADY HUGH GROSVENOR.

Hyde Park Corner.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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POVERTY AND . . . INDEPENDENCE.

IN the new number of the *Edinburgh Review* there is a weighty article on the condition of the poor which ought to receive the attention of all who are interested in the condition of the people. The writer recalls the appointment of a Royal Commission in 1832, and draws a marked distinction between it and that which is now sitting. Broadly speaking, the effect of the Poor Law anterior to 1832 was to sap the independence of the poor; and there can be little question that those who live on the borderland of hard times have gained in character from the changes that followed as a result of that enquiry. It can never be forgotten that there was a time in English history when pauperism left no taint upon the individual. It was assumed that even the able-bodied labouring man was not competent to maintain himself and his family, and, as the reviewer points out, idleness, improvidence, discontent, corruption, vice, and violence formed the result. The Commissioners of that time recognised the state of affairs, and in their report drew a sharp distinction between those who were merely poor and those who were destitute, regarding the latter

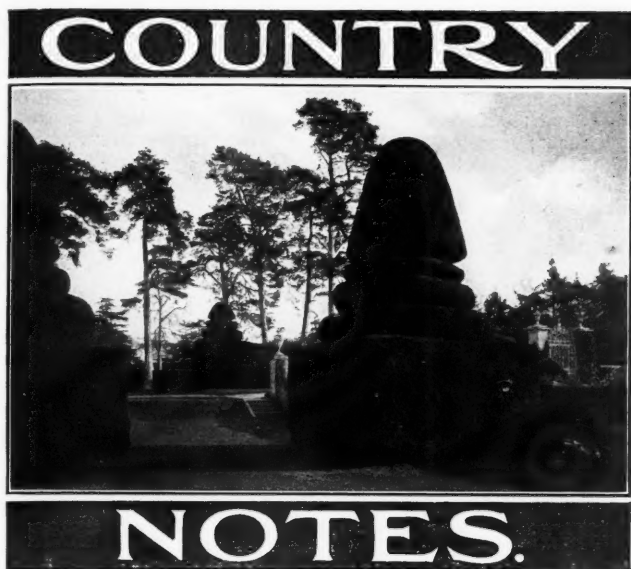
as coming within the province of the Poor Law. But the principle laid down by them was that the situation of the person relieved should never be either in reality or appearance more eligible than that of the independent labourer of the lowest class. As a result, the reviewer declares that the passing of the new Poor Law had the effect of setting free "the latent forces of energy existing everywhere," and of preparing "the able-bodied man to make full use of the openings which the years brought in rapid succession." Put in other words, a fair attempt was made to make the working men trust to themselves and to cultivate in them the virtue of self-reliance. At the same time, it was recognised that the State ought to care for those who were really needy and incapable of working for themselves.

Since 1834 pauperism has declined, and the condition of the people improved in every way. At the same time, new causes of distress have arisen, and the appointment of the present Commission is an admission on the part of the authorities that the new conditions require careful examination. The very manner in which labour has been organised has led to want of employment at certain seasons and under certain circumstances, and the relief of those out of work has so far been carried out mainly by voluntary agents. The Mansion House Fund of 1886, the Salvation Army, the various soup kitchens, and other similar institutions have relieved the distress. Indeed, it is perhaps not too much to say that the real cause for the appointment of the present Commission is what is known as the question of unemployment. The writer of the article before us points a warning finger in this direction. He says that "the principle running through the whole report is that of discouraging dependence on State aid." But recently there has been a tendency to avoid this Benthamite doctrine. The Commissioners of 1832 pointed out the cause as clearly as they might do to-day when they said that the bane of all pauper legislation has been the legislation for extreme cases. It must, and very frequently does, happen that a deserving individual meets with pure misfortune for which no adequate relief is provided. When a case like this gets into the newspapers, there are persons of enthusiastic temperament who at once condemn the laws under which such an occurrence is possible. But as the Commission said, "Every exception, every violation of the general rule to meet a real case of unusual hardship, lets in a whole class of fraudulent cases by which that rule must in time be destroyed." The moral of all this seems to be that we ought not to let sentiment prevail too greatly. By all means let the State be just to the point of being generous to all who are really deserving or helpless, but, as the present President of the Local Government Board has pointed out, infinite harm is likely to ensue if we allow the philanthropist to help the loafer and the shirker.

In analysing the work done by the Commission, the reviewer points out, with, perhaps, what some people will think an undue amount of pessimism, that the old-age pension scheme has, so far, been found impracticable. He draws attention to the fact that already the State makes provision for cases of extreme indigence in old age at the workhouse, and the difficulty lies in inventing a plan by which virtue in misfortune would be relieved and yet no encouragement given to sloth and imprudence. Nor is he too hopeful about any heroic remedy for want of employment being evolved. He says the Commissioners will do good service if they make it clear that the Poor Law must be negative rather than positive. The best Poor Law can do little more than give play to healthy natural forces. Where attempts have been made by public authorities to provide employment for those in distress, unless for strictly temporary purposes, the result has been to perpetuate the evil complained of. A great many of the suggestions that find expression in the newspapers of to-day are extremely wild and impracticable; and there is always the danger with a wide popular electorate of ill-informed men being returned to Parliament, who would bring grief to the country by attempting the impossible. Under these circumstances it is a good thing that the subject should be discussed by a cautious and safe intellect. The truest sympathy with labour, and especially labour in distress, does not always find expression in that outburst of universal philanthropy which Canning described as having occurred to the Needy Knife-grinder. The English constitution has been slowly and solidly built, and to attempt rash changes in it would come extremely near to an act of insanity.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Hugh Grosvenor. Lady Hugh Grosvenor is a daughter of the Earl and Countess of Erne, and her marriage to Lord Hugh Grosvenor of the 1st Life Guards, an uncle of the Duke of Westminster, took place at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, on Saturday last.



It is a felicitous idea to invite the Prince of Wales to *déjeuner* at the Guildhall on the occasion of his return from India. It will be remembered that, after His Royal Highness made his former celebrated tour round the world, he delivered a speech to the City Fathers which would have been memorable, if for nothing else, for the admirable warning that he uttered in the three words, "Wake up, England!" If his visit to the outlying portions of the Empire suggested so pregnant a saying, it may reasonably be expected that the Indian tour will produce fruit at least equally good in the reflective mind of the Heir Apparent. Some of us are old enough to remember a day when India was far from being regarded as the brightest jewel in the English crown. Trouble and disaster were freely prophesied for it; yet these forebodings have been falsified by the event. By every test that can be applied, it appears that India has made extraordinary progress during the last two generations. The population has trebled, and so has the general wealth. At the same time, new problems and new difficulties have arisen, and after his leisurely and pleasant time among the Eastern subjects of his father, we have no doubt that the Prince of Wales will come back with an important and weighty message to deliver. Nor could a more suitable occasion for its utterance be found than that to be provided in the City of London.

King Edward VII. is a representative Englishman in many respects, but in none is he more so than in his love of sport, and he cannot but derive a considerable amount of pleasure from witnessing the international sports at Athens. They seem to have been excellent in themselves, and independently of the associations connected with the Stadium. It is curious to read the very modern accounts of the modern sports conducted on this classical ground. "The second day of the Olympic games," says the correspondent of *The Times*, "was for the most part spent in working off the minor events, such as tennis, football, and shooting." Probably enough the Greek of 1,500 years ago used language just as homely when he related to his comrade how So-and-So had acquitted himself in the chariot, or how far another of his friends threw the disc. But, poetry apart, Athens is an admirable place for holding an international sporting competition. It has an abundance of attractions for its own sake at this season of the year, and it is neutral ground on which the champions of Europe and America may very well meet to test the prowess of their representatives.

In dealing with the San Francisco disaster, President Roosevelt and his compatriots have displayed a pride that is more than Anglo-Saxon. Other countries, and particularly Great Britain, would have been glad to extend the most generous help to the victims, and proposals for the usual contributions have already been made in various quarters; but the President of the United States, while acknowledging with the utmost courtesy and tact the kindly sympathy which prompted this offer, has given it to be understood that his people will themselves attend to the wants of the victims. This, of course, is very right and proper. The United States is the richest nation in the world, or, at any rate, it contains more millionaires than any other country, and is quite able to look after the unfortunates. Under the circumstances the European nations did well to make offer of their practical sympathy, but President Roosevelt did equally well to refuse pecuniary aid. As a matter of fact, subscriptions have been gathered in the great cities of the United States with a rapidity that is almost unexampled, and provisions have flowed

into the wrecked city with an almost prodigal generosity. We are safe in asserting that nothing that is possible will be left undone to relieve the wretchedness caused by the earthquake.

While no one is likely to under-value the pluck and energy, the determination to waste no time in useless regret, and the practical business aptitude with which the people of San Francisco have set about rebuilding their demolished homes, we cannot help feeling a certain doubt as to their prudence. Would it not be well for them to wait a little while and see what science has to say? This, at all events, is a lesson to be extracted from a recent deliverance of Professor Turner. In childhood we were taught that the world was round like a ball, but depressed at both poles like an orange. It seems, however, that this description requires to be modified by means of another vegetable metaphor. The world, according to the latest exponents of science, resembles a pear rather than an orange, though doubt seems to exist as to which is the thin and which the bulging end of it! However that may be, it seems to be established that it is pear-shaped, with a tendency to become spheroidal under compulsion of the laws of gravity, and the shrinking of certain parts is declared to be the cause of earthquakes and world shakings.

Now, as becomes a grave exponent of scientific truth, the seismologist is hesitating and doubtful. He says it is only within a comparatively recent period that we have begun to take careful note of the times and places in which earthquakes occur, and, therefore, he cannot say with certainty that San Francisco, being once visited with this calamity, is certain to be the recipient of another shock hereafter; but if there be any truth in the doctrine of rings (and the experience of Japan would seem to say so) the plain man will have sufficient evidence before him to beware of again building his castles and towers upon a portion of the earth that has once gone through the dreadful experience of an earthquake. Perhaps it is not yet too late for the people of San Francisco to take these considerations into account. It may be very noble and courageous to rebuild on the devastated site, but it would certainly be more prudent to follow the example of the Boers and trek to a situation outside of the ring, and, therefore, not so liable to these visitations.

TO CERES.

The swallows have come, and the cuckoo is singing;
The seed-time is past.
The pear and the cherry are bursting with blossom,
Too lovely to last.
The meadows are roll'd and the green grass is thirsty;
All sown is the grain.
But the seed-beds are cold, and silent, Oh! Ceres!
Oh! send us the rain!

C. E. DE LA POER BERESFORD.

It is much to be feared that the prospect held forth by the pictures of cherry trees shown on another page is a misleading one. The stormy and cold weather of the last few days has had a disastrous effect upon the crop. Entire orchards may be seen in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire turned from the snowy white which they began to assume after the fine weather at Easter into a dark brown, the petals of the blossom having crumpled up and fallen to the ground. It is worth remarking that most of the damage has been done in those gardens and orchards which are most favourably situated, and where the fruit was as a consequence in an advanced state. On the higher and more exposed ground the trees are later, and so far show little traces of injury, but should this weather continue it is to be feared that the same fate will overtake them. Luckily many other kinds of fruit are considerably later than usual this year, and may thus escape the untimely frosts. It cannot be said, however, that the outlook is at all cheerful for the fruit-growers and market-gardeners.

"Within the memory of the oldest inhabitant," as the saying is, there has never been such a year for wild strawberry bloom as the present one. Patches in the Southern hedges are quite white with the tiny flowers. It remains to be seen whether the bloom will result in a correspondingly large crop of the sweet little strawberries, but there is at least the promise, and if it does the children will have fine times in the lanes on their way to school. If the same conditions favour both wild and garden strawberries; we may find a good omen for the cultivated fruit in the abundance of the wild blossom. A white bloom, the first to show on our orchard trees generally, which we seem to look for in vain this year is that of the early Victoria plum. Last year the show of white plum blossom was very fine, like snow spread on the trees; this year there is virtually none. One speaks, of course, of the districts one has seen; there may be orchards where it is in plenty.

Poultry-farmers in the Southern Counties and elsewhere are complaining of a very bad proportion of hatches out of chickens and also of ducklings. There seems very little question that a continued prevalence of drying east wind is much against a successful hatching, and there has been just such a prevalence this year at the crucial time. There are various devices for checking the ill effects of this cold drying wind on the embryos, but none that appears really of much value. The early-hatched poult—those that came out into the world before the east wind spell began—showed a much better proportion of chicks to eggs. The simple method of the old-fashioned hen-wife, viz., that of sprinkling the eggs, when the hen comes off, with lukewarm water, seems as efficacious as any.

Trout in the chalk streams seem to be backward this year, if it is fair to judge by one or two days spent on the water at Easter. In one small Dorsetshire stream not a fish was to be seen, and they evidently had not left their winter retreats. Pale olives were hatching out on the Frome in fair quantities, and small fish up to $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. fed steadily in the runs from eleven o'clock till about four. Those caught were not in perfect condition, being silvery rather than golden. In the afternoon they turned their attention to something smaller, which it was impossible to identify, taking it just below the surface, and nowhere was it possible to find a good fish on the feed. The shortness of grass, of course, makes the farmer eager to still use the water on the meadows, and constant alteration of the water level, as we all know, has a tendency to check a trout's inclination to rise.

In an interesting paper in the last number of the *Auk*, Mr. F. W. Carpenter reviews the efforts which have been made during the last five-and-thirty years to determine the height at which birds fly during migration, supplementing this by some careful observations of his own, made through an astronomical telescope—as were the earlier observations. He has come to the conclusion that the earlier estimations, which gave the maximum height as nearly three miles, are decidedly over the mark, since only in one instance was a bird found "slightly over a mile high," the majority not rising above the earth more than half a mile or less—on an average, perhaps, between 400 yds. and 500 yds. These computations were made by directing a telescope at the full moon, so that the birds could be distinctly seen as they passed the brilliantly-lighted field of the telescope. The velocity of the wind does not appear to have made any difference in the altitudes attained, since on one night it was moving at the rate of four miles, and on another at twelve miles per hour. Probably, during wet and stormy weather, birds fly, when on migration, much nearer the earth. At any rate, Mr. W. Eagle Clarke, who, in this country, is our foremost authority on the subject, has shown that when crossing the sea they keep so near the surface that they barely top the crests of the waves.

We do not seem to have had our spring migrants with us at all unusually early this year, nor, though the year promised to be an early one far back in the winter, was the promise kept, its fulfilment being delayed, probably to the general advantage of floral things, by some very cold spells in late winter and spring. The present writer saw the swallow for the first time on April 9th—apparently an early pioneer, for no more were to be seen till many days later—the garden warbler on the 11th, the wheatear on the 12th, the wryneck on the 14th, and first heard the cuckoo on the 15th; the chiffchaff appeared on the 16th. In this part of the country, about halfway between London and the South Coast, it seems to be the wryneck's usual habit to precede the cuckoo by several days, though this is said not to be very commonly the case. The wheatear is only a bird of passage in that district, seen in its spring and autumn movements only. Elsewhere, further to the west, it is reported to have been observed this year at the quite abnormally-early date of March 6th.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners." It is one of the cruellest things in life to observe how the tendency to imitation in human beings and lower animals, alike, leads them down, not up. A new terror is being added to the gardener's life. Hitherto we have thought our primulas fairly safe from the attacks of birds which have the evil habit of snipping off the heads of the lowlier primroses in search for the nectar, as we presume, which these flowers hold in their cups. Sparrows are the culprits that habitually snip off the primroses in all their varieties—curiously enough choosing those that are in a bed in decided preference to those growing in a hedge. We had hoped that the primulas were too tall for them to reach with comfort; but this year, for some reason, the blackbirds seem to have taken the sparrows for their examples, and reaching up, with their taller stature, have snipped off the primulas' blooms as easily as the sparrows those of the primroses. If only we could find some

instances of the animals being led to better things rather than to worse by the example of companions, our view of Nature's course might be less pessimistic. We are told that sparrows "go for" the primrose blooms only for the sake of the moisture, and that if they be given water ready for them to drink they will not touch the flowers; but we have tried the plan of placing water in pans beside the primroses. The sparrows, with a good taste, prefer the nectar; perhaps we should have given them *eau sucrée*. Threads crossed over the flowers are supposed to be preventive. For a season they have some terrors; the next season the birds use them as nest-building material.

Criticism has very little to say about the celebration of Shakespeare's birthday, but the number of occasions of a similar kind cannot but give rise to an idea in the mind of the disinterested observer that we are approximating to the doctrines of Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity. Yet, as a matter of fact, if all our great celebrities—artistic, military, scientific, literary, and all the rest—had each his day there would not be more days set apart to the work of commemoration than there were to the Saints in mediæval England. There was scarcely a week, as we know from the old works on agriculture, that was not sacred to at least one member of the hagiology, and the humblest labourer found therein an excuse for going to the pot-house, or what was the equivalent of the pot-house in early times, and drinking ale and otherwise disporting himself. We do not pay equal honour to those whom we may call the heroes of humanity. As a matter of fact, the birthday of no great man is kept as a general holiday in Great Britain, and even the Shakespeare celebration affects only an infinitesimal part of the population. Perhaps the only close approach to the keeping of a saint's day is in Scotland, where the immortal memory of Robert Burns is drunk with enthusiasm by probably a majority of the nation. And what a singular saint he was to canonise!

A ROSE TREE.

In Mystic Gardens, wide and fair,
Snow-white a lovely Rose tree stands,
A bloom with blossoms rich and rare
Which sweeten all the breathing air,
And gladden all who linger there.

And all who will may linger there,
But may not touch the blossoms fair
Which sweeten all the breathing air

It sweetens all the breathing air;
But thorns it has for stranger hands;
Yet I may kiss each petal there,
For mine that Rose tree, rich and rare,
Which sweetens all the breathing air.

JESSIE ANNIE ANDERSON.

The importation of fruit from our Colonies is rapidly increasing, and Western Australia has entered into severe competition with the many other fruit-growing areas in the British Empire. We inspected a large consignment in Messrs. Keeling and Hunt's offices, in Monument Square, on Tuesday last, and may at once say that no home-grown apple approaches, either in quality or appearance, the clean attractive fruits from Western Australia. The consignment was made up of contributions from various farmers in the district between Banbury and Mount Barker, and Mr. Drakard, who has charge of the fruit, told us that the eighty acres of apple orchards owned by Mr. Sounness, at Mount Barker, were a picture of fruitfulness. It is significant that only three varieties are chosen for importation, and we presume the fruit-growing acres are chiefly devoted to these sorts. Surely the English grower may take a lesson from this wise restriction of varieties, and not crowd his orchards with fruits of no commercial value.

The varieties sent from Australia consist of Cleopatra, Jonathan, and Dunn's Seedling. The first named is an exceedingly pretty, clean-skinned fruit, suggestive of the famous Newtown Pippin, and it is highly recommended for cooking and the making of jellies; but we thought it as sweet and juicy as Cox's Orange Pippin. Jonathan is a ruddy-coloured fruit, not large, but a veritable sweetmeat. We have never tasted a more delicious fruit than this, possessing not only good flavour, but beauty of colouring and shape—indeed, a thoroughly-serviceable market fruit. Dunn's Seedling we cared less for, but it is a good eating apple also. It seems impossible for the English fruit-grower to compete with such produce as this; and cold storage and rapid transit account for the remarkable freshness and quality of the fruit. Many of the American apples have good looks, but a mealy and unpleasant flavour; the Western Australian consignments equal the finest samples of home production.

THE CHOICE AND CULTIVATION OF CHERRIES.



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AT MOUNT PLEASANT, HEDGERLEY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

CHERRY-TIME is with us, the most gladsome season of the year, when flowers dapple hedgerow and garden, and foretell a greater abundance to come. But we will in the present notes consider more the usefulness of the cherry as a fruit for market and home consumption than its picturesque beauty in the late April days. It is certainly one of the most profitable fruits that can be grown. The crop is generally a fair average, more profuse, of course, in some years than in others, but a dismal failure has seldom to be recorded.

Mr. George Bunyard, whose authority on the profitableness or otherwise of a certain tree is unquestionable, says of the cherry: "As an orchard crop, where the soil and situation are favourable, few hardy fruits are capable of giving, on an average, a better cash return," and he also mentions: "Few of our hardy fruit trees are more accommodating than the cherry. The cottager, in his little garden, may have it in the form of a bush, pyramid, standard, or as a single cordon against a fence or wall, and the amateur may have it in these forms also, as well as on espaliers. He may grow it successfully under glass, either planted out or in pots, and thus extend the season of this delicious fruit from early May to the middle of September by growing early, mid-season, and late varieties. As regards soil and situation, the sweet or dessert cherry succeeds in the Southern and South Midland Counties the best. It thrives well in rather an elevated position, where it has the advantage of light, good natural drainage, freedom from damp, immunity from frost when in

flower, and the advantage of driving showers of rain in the early summer; these not only refresh the trees, but keep the foliage healthy and clean."

We quote these remarks, as they coincide with our own experience. On the breezy Buckinghamshire hilltops the cherry thrives amazingly, and in the time of the flowers the countryside seems under a snowdrift; but this soon passes away, to give place in due season to the waxy fruits which find so profitable a market when carefully assorted. There is no more suitable site



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WHITE HEARTS IN BLOOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

A CHERRY ORCHARD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

for a cherry orchard than a meadow, or the trees may be planted with every prospect of success in a field, provided one point is not forgotten—the importance of removing grass a clear 3ft. around the stem. When writing of the experiments in the Woburn fruit farm we described the remarkable results obtained by thoroughly conducted trials from trees against which not a blade of grass is allowed to nestle, and though the apple tree was in that case under consideration, the principle applies with equal force to the cherry.

Utility frequently suffers at the expense of picturesqueness, but the sweet spring scene of sheep and gambolling lambs under the cherry trees, white with the snowdrift of blossom, teaches a

practical lesson. The cherry and the lamb are good companions, and we advise that sheep be kept in the cherry orchard, especially when they are given good food. Not only is the grass kept short, but the sheep-droppings act as an admirable fertiliser. Success can never be assured when rank grass grows close to the stems, and we hope every grower of cherries who has not seen the error of his ways will at once give the 3ft. space of clear ground which is a necessity for the health and, of course, fruitfulness of the tree. Light, air, and moisture the roots must have; but how often is it the case that the base of the stem is buried in rank herbage.

The next important phase of cherry culture is the selection



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NEAR A BUCKINGHAMSHIRE BARN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of varieties, and in these days it is not needful to restrict the list to those which grew in the gardens of our forbears, but the golden rule is the fewer the better. The market grower of fruit makes a great mistake in growing too many varieties, all doubtless possessing commendable qualities, but for the most part lacking in those essential to a profitable industry. One of the best-known authorities in Covent Garden Market highly recommends the luscious Waterloo variety, a large, handsome jet black fruit filled with juice, and agreeably sweet in flavour. It is "taking to the eye," but, unlike so many fruits that have only appearance to recommend them, Waterloo is palatable also, whilst it ripens when White Hearts, beloved in childhood days, are over. Early Rivers, also a black cherry, and, as the name suggests, early in ripening, May Duke, Kent Bigarreau, which follows after it, Florence, a white cherry, the late red Kentish, and, of course, the famous Morello, the cherry of all for preserving, and eating only when dead ripe, may well compose the list of profitable marketable sorts. The little black cherry may be planted, but less freely than formerly. It is a delicious fruit, but the larger varieties recommended bring in a better monetary return.

It is useless, however, to grow the fruit well, and in the best varieties, unless great care is taken in packing. The English market grower, although the cultural excellence of his products is indisputable, pays little heed to the grading and selection of his fruits. We are certainly improving, but there is much to accomplish yet in the way the fruit is sent to market. We have interviewed more than one of the leading Covent Garden salesmen, and every one deplores the careless packing of excellent fruits. Certain sorts of cherries bruise less than others, but this is not a matter the grower should consider. All the fruit should be treated in the same way, with an even sample to the bottom of the basket. The dainty packing of the French growers should be a rebuke to the carelessness of the growers at home;



Copyright.

OLD AGE.

"C.L."

but the lesson goes unheeded, whilst there is still the same cry, "Fruit-growing does not pay." We are conscious of the uneven battle the English grower has to fight—excessive railway rates, and so on—but there is no excuse for clumsy packing and suspicious grading. There is another point the planter should take into consideration, and that is the importance of keeping each variety by itself. If Waterloo is planted, keep that variety separate from others, as this prevents waste of labour in shifting ladders when gathering the fruit from one part of the orchard to another. The varieties should be so arranged that each row ripens at the same time and follows on in succession.

The question of pruning, which seems to trouble fruit-growers of all degrees, need not apply to the cultivation of the cherry. No pruning in the true sense of this much-abused garden term is necessary. When the trees have been planted, stake each one very firmly, and examine the trees frequently when the orchard is exposed, which is the case with many of the Kentish and Buckinghamshire orchards. Nothing hinders the roots of a tree becoming thoroughly established in the soil so much as the swaying of the stem, and the reason is obvious. Where cattle are allowed in the orchard, the trees must be cradled, and remain untouched by the knife for a year, when judicious cutting



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SHOWING NATURAL GROWTH.

"C.L."

back is advisable to bring the trees to the desired shape. The future pruning will consist in regulating the growth and cutting away the shoots that point inwards, as these are weakly and seldom bear fruit, whilst they prevent the better placed and stronger growths receiving their share of sunshine and wind.

We have only considered in these notes the cherry as an orchard tree, but, as we have already pointed out, it may be grown in many ways. A visit to the famous nurseries of Messrs. Rivers at Sawbridgeworth in the time of the cherry is a revelation to those who are only acquainted with fruit in the orchard or meadow. The trees are grown under glass, not with excessive artificial warmth, but sufficient to bring out the full size and richness of the varieties cultivated, and there may be seen many sorts which we should recommend to the market grower. It is pleasant to record, in the face of the much-vaunted success of certain American hybridists, that the name of the great fruit-raisers, Rivers, is renowned the whole world over, and many of the fruits we treasure to-day on our tables had their birth in the Sawbridgeworth nurseries. It is, however, as an orchard tree, we think, that the cherry appeals most generally, and we are assured that no fruit is more profitable to both the grower and seller.

THE MARSHLAND WINDMILLS.

IN certain upland districts there are few changes the lover of the picturesque has more cause to lament than the slow but sure disappearance of the old windmills as they make way for steam mills. In a no less degree the dweller in marshland districts has cause to regret the gradual substitution of ugly brick and corrugated iron structures for the quaint old drainage windmills, some of which, for a couple of centuries at least, had been the most striking features of the wide, level lowland. On such monotonous marish plains as exist in the

Broads district, in Essex, and elsewhere where trees are few and far between, a windmill supplies a useful landmark, and at the same time lends picturesqueness to a scene that without it would often be tame and depressing. True, its gaunt outlines, seen in impressive silhouette against a background of lowering sky or lurid sunset, may tend to emphasise the monotony of its surroundings; but like a beacon on an islet rock, it serves as a guide amid a trackless wilderness, and at times, when the marshlands wear their most sombre and deserted aspect, its whirling sails impart life to the stagnant scene. When the floods were "out," as they frequently were in the days in which narrow-arched brick bridges held back the water when the rivers were swollen after heavy rains, the busy mills, dotted like huge buoys over an inland sea, did their work well, and although that work may now

old windmills is in a large measure responsible. At the present time, if one wishes to realise what the fens were like in the windmill days, one cannot do better than take one's stand on the wall of the Roman fortress at Burgh Castle, which overlooks the Breydon estuary. There the courses of the rivers—the Yare, the Bure, and the Waveney—which enter Breydon can be traced for miles inland by the windmills still standing beside them; and among these mills are some of the largest and tallest of their kind. They relieve the level sameness of the least-attractive reaches of the three principal waterways of the Broads district, and in all probability it will be many years before the River Commissioners are willing to dispense with them; but, from the point of view of picturesqueness, they can hardly be compared with some of the old wooden mills which still survive in out-of-the-way corners of Broadland. These latter, in some cases still surrounded by land not easily distinguishable from the swampy margins of the Broads, have a character of their own—a rude primitiveness which Nature has little difficulty in making appear to be a part of herself. The birds take possession of them as though they were isolated willows or alders; swallows nest in their upper storeys, where the sitting birds often revolve with the mill; snipe call "tinker, tinker" from the top of the uppermost sail; owls and kestrels even make their homes in some of the older and more dilapidated mills, and litter them with the remains of their prey. In summer the tall grasses and willow-herbs rise so high around them that the whirling sails sometimes sweep through them and help to scatter their seeds and pollen; for some of these old mills are built in such a way that the sails nearly touch the ground, and must often be dodged by the millmen as they go in and out of the lower door.

In the old days, when almost everyone who chose to do so could carry a gun in the marshes, and have his share of the wildfowl which bred there, or came in winter, the old mills often provided shelter for chilled and drenched gunners who were overtaken by storms in the midst of a mazy network of dikes. Around the fire, which the millman kept burning whenever wet and windy weather compelled him to stay for any length of time on duty, wildfowling, who carried the old long-barrelled muzzle-loaders, would exchange experiences with river-poachers, who were waiting for dusk before beginning their draw-netting for roach and bream. Above the creaking, groaning, and rumbling of the wooden cog-wheels, which gave the interior the appearance of a

mediaeval torture-chamber, confidential stories were shouted without fear of lurking eavesdroppers, and many a marshland mystery was solved by the makers of the mystery themselves. Indeed, some of the participants in these casual meetings could remember the old "free-trading" days, and would relate with a suspicious knowledge of detail ancient cargo-running adventures in which the marshland mills and millmen had played a part. For in the days when the old-fashioned keels were as numerous as the wherries on the East Anglian rivers, these typical craft of the inland waterways carried many a cargo of contraband from the coast to the inland towns, and some of the more isolated mills served as convenient *caches* when there was need for temporary concealment. Beside an almost grown-up Norfolk Broad there is still standing a ruined mill from which a wherry-load of kegs



B. C. Wickison.

ON A NORFOLK BROAD.

Copyright.

be done better by more modern methods, the sight of an old marsh windmill in decay makes an impression on a sensitive nature like to that made by the ooze-embedded hull of an old coasting craft which steam has driven from the sea.

In the days when the suggestion of a possible drought would have excited ridicule among the natives of the Fens, the Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire levels were even more plentifully dotted with windmills than Broadland is to-day; now you may travel for miles across the fens and scarcely see a single mill. Even in Wicken Fen, the only surviving tract of primitive fen, the quaint old wooden mill has been allowed to fall into decay. Fenland to-day, save where the trees are beginning to grow, presents a far more monotonous aspect than it did when it was a land of meres and marshes; and for this the disappearance of the



AT DORDRECHT.

is said to have been thrown into the Broad by a millman who, from the top of the mill, caught sight of the approaching preventive-men, and local legend has it that some of those kegs are lying in the bed of the Broad to-day. More gruesome stories are told of old mills in which lone millmen have met with fearful and sometimes fatal accidents through being caught in the shieldless wooden cog-wheels; while other mills are said to be haunted by the ghosts of lone-living men who, after being missed for a while, were sought for and at last found to have hanged themselves in isolated mills;

but although a drainage windmill erected on the gateway of a marshland monastery would seem to be a most likely building to have a spectral inhabitant, the only ghost story associated with the ruined mill on the gateway of the Abbey of St. Benet's-at-Holme seems to have had its origin in the movements of a stray calf that once took shelter among the ruins.

Most of the millmen are fishermen, and by means of nets stretched across the mill sluices large quantities of dike eels are taken in the autumn, when they commence their annual migration to the sea. And although little is said about it—for the



BETWEEN WIND AND WATER.

best of reasons—good catches of bream are made occasionally in the mill dikes when the sluice-trap bars the way of the fish that are making their way up the dikes to spawn. At such times a net is drawn from the entrance of the dike towards the sluice, and when the fish are imprisoned in a space a few yards square as many as the poacher requires are easily taken from the water by means of a kind of landing-net. The use of the draw-net is now illegal in the Eastern rivers except where it is used for taking smelts, but the interior of an old windmill is still found to be a convenient place for drying nets which have somehow become wetted by prohibited waters.

But it is rarely that many years are allowed to pass without one of them seeing the destruction of an old marsh mill. Some of the mills crumble to pieces so slowly that they are hardly missed when they are gone; others are wrecked by the winter gales, and even when the damage done by the storms is comparatively slight it is not often that one of the old wooden mills is repaired. With the more massive brick-towered mills the case is different, and it will be a long time before we see the last of them; but when one of the more picturesque but fragile structures becomes unworkable an ugly iron-cased steam pump usually takes its place. So, as time goes on, the marshland artist will find his favourite subjects becoming fewer and fewer, and the well-drained marshes will gradually assume an aspect of utterly unrelieved monotony, which may last until that time arrives, which the geologists say is sure to come, when the sea will win back its ancient bed. As our pictures show, there are other fields for him to explore.



W. Selfe.

A KENTISH WINDMILL.

Copyright

IN THE GARDEN.

BIENNIAL FLOWERS FROM SEED.

THE biennial is a plant that blooms the year after the seed is sown, and this group contains a few of the most homely and beautiful of border flowers, including the Canterbury Bell, Foxglove, Antirrhinum, Wallflowers, and Stocks. The very mention of these names recalls many a quaint picture in the borders of our forbears, who, before the fashion for floral bedding set in, knew the value of the hardy plant in giving dashing masses of colour to the garden. May and early June are the best times to sow the seed, and all that is needful is to prepare a corner of light soil in the garden, and there sow thinly. When the seedlings come up thin them out, and then transplant elsewhere, whilst those remaining in the bed may go to the places they are to beautify in the following autumn. We may well give a word of advice: Sow only seed derived from the best sources. Canterbury Bells are of many forms, but those of a big cup-and-saucer shape are not pleasing, representing to our mind ugliness of form and coarseness in colouring. It is the small-flowered varieties of pure shades which appeal most strongly to us—the clear self blue, snow white, rose, lavender, and mauve; and plant them so as to obtain a colony of colouring. It is impossible to do so unless the greatest care is taken in the selection. Snapdragons, or Antirrhinums, form another useful race of garden flowers, and here again it is the self or one coloured flowers that give the greatest beauty to the garden, deep crimson, yellow, orange-red, and salmon being those we most appreciate. There is the point also about growth. We see nothing to admire in the much-praised dwarf Antirrhinums, representing to us a mutilated type without a vestige of the free, not to say graceful, growth of those which are sometimes described as “ordinary” Antirrhinums. The Evening Primrose is a beautiful biennial, and a succession of its soft yellow flowers is maintained for many weeks. It is a plant to naturalise and allow to run wild wherever its rude vigour does not interrupt the progress of other things, and in the cool light of a summer evening its delicate colouring is dimly seen. If one is short-sighted its presence is revealed by a subtle fragrance poured from the fragile bloom. The Foxglove is another biennial that is best in free groups. Scatter the seed here and there by the shrubbery margin, or on the edge of the woodland if such a feature exists on the estate. Foxgloves will sow themselves, and the beautiful *Gloxiniaflora* strain becomes in time quite naturalised. This is a very distinct selection. Sometimes the flowers are snow white, with big chocolate-coloured

blotches, suggesting some rare Orchid, and occasionally a form appears which perplexes the amateur. This sport has now been fixed, and is called *monstrosa*. Apparently several blooms on the top of the spike join company and expand into one large cup-shaped flower. We are constantly receiving flowers and photographs of this departure from the normal type in Foxglove-time, but there is nothing novel in it. It is well named *monstrosa*; it is a purely undesirable freak.

THE WATER FAIRY-FLOWER, OR GOOD LUCK LILY.

A correspondent is delighted with this flower, and wishes for information as to its culture. Messrs. Barr and Sons write as follows: “The Water Fairy-flower, or Chinese Sacred Lily, is a species of *Polyanthus Narcissus* from Northern China, where the climate and soil impart to the bulb a marvellous

precocity, together with a wonderful power of producing a great abundance of flowers. Its growth is extraordinarily rapid in the temperature of a warm greenhouse or sitting-room. In nearly all houses in China and Japan the Sacred or Good Luck Lilies are grown in the living-rooms, in fancy bowls, filled simply with pebbles and water; and the natives compete with one another in growing the finest specimens for their New Year's festival, successful culture being regarded as an emblem of ‘good luck.’ Each bulb produces several heads of bloom, the individual flowers being white with yellow cup if single, or white with yellow nectary if double, and delightfully fragrant. In this country the bulbs of

the Sacred Lily can be flowered as successfully as in China, and to watch the rapidity of their growth is most interesting. Keep in a sunny window by day, and on a table near the centre of the room by night, as frost destroys the flower-buds. The plants should not be kept in a room while gas is being burnt, as a too dry atmosphere shrivels up the flower-buds; a draughty situation must also be avoided. The more natural conditions of a warm greenhouse will prove the greatest success, and the plants can be removed from thence to a sitting-room when in bloom.”

FLOWERS IN SHADE.

Unfortunately, the writer is unable to “garden” in shade, as the whole place is bathed in sunshine, and there are no cool, shady nooks where plants that enjoy some protection from the sun can be grown; but in a former garden the sweetest spots were those in which shade-loving plants abounded. None was prettier than the Spanish Scilla (*S. campanulata*), which grew in thousands; not the blue form only, but the rose and white and a soft lilac shade. This blooms in April and lasts several weeks in beauty, a forerunner to the fragrant Day Lily, which sends up a profusion of bloom—fleeting, it is true, but following each other in rapid succession. The ordinary Bluebell, Primroses, Woodruff, Ferns, of course, Forget-me-not, *Trillium grandiflorum* (the white Wood Lily, but it enjoys some moisture), hardy Cyclamen, now prettily in flower, *Hypericum moserianum*, Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus*), and Bamboos. Annual flowers are a failure, the seedlings suffering from the absence of much sunshine.

RANDOM NOTES.

Blue Siberian Scilla and Fabvier Rose—Many of the Roses have a spring as well as summer and winter beauty, and this attraction is centred in the colour of the young shoots. Frequently they assume a full crimson shade, which is about as effective to the eye as a bed of flowers. A large group of Fabvier Rose, at the time of writing, glows with colour from the young shoots in the sunlight, and beneath the bushes the Siberian Scilla has spread its carpet of blue. The association of colour is quite happy, and we shall extend this planting next autumn.

Greenfly and the Roses.—Greenfly as the days become warmer will make its appearance, especially if the winds are chilly. It is then the pest inflicts serious damage upon the young growths. Immediately its presence is detected syringe with moderate vigour on the upper and lower surface of the leaf, and repeat the operation when it is considered necessary. The great object is to prevent greenfly obtaining a strong hold of the plants. Only severe treatment with insecticides is then of any avail, and these are not, of course, beneficial to the plants.

Benefit of Stirring the Surface of the Soil.—The amateur gardener seldom realises the importance, especially at this season, of stirring the surface of the soil. The result of this simple task is to let air and sunshine to the roots, which soon respond to their beneficent influence by stimulating the growth of the plants. A loose surface to the soil enables the genial spring rain to nourish the roots; indeed, it may be said that a hard, or, as the gardener calls it “caked,” surface to the soil is most detrimental to plant-life.

THE LAPWING.

THIS bird is, to us, the most familiar of all the plover tribe, and has a wide distribution, ranging in the North from Greenland to Japan, and in the South from Morocco to Persia. In this country there are few tracts of marshland, meadow, or shore where it may not be seen at one time or other throughout the year. Most of us know its plaintive cry, and have watched its curious, erratic flight, but few of us are familiar with its exact markings. Here it is that we are much helped by photography, and as there are ways of getting the peewit to face the camera, we can obtain an accurate record of the living bird's shape, we can learn what feathers can be erected or depressed, while the sexual differences can be noted very accurately. The only defect in this method is that photography does not reproduce the colours of the plumage.

Last spring (1905) I selected seven nests near my house (in East Lothian), which were in bare ploughed fields, where there was no grass to hide any part of the bird as it approached its eggs, and where there was nothing to cast any shadow or interfere with the light. The first time I set down my camera, focussed



TURNING OVER EGGS, FACING A STRONG WIND.

spring, which, when depressed, touched a metal terminal, and thus completed an electric circuit, a dry-cell battery being hidden under the camera. The current on reaching an electromagnet fixed to the front of the camera, released the shutter,

so that there was actually no need for me to be present at the moment when the photograph was being taken. I have several times left my apparatus and returned in an hour to find that the bird had released the shutter. The fault of this release is that, if the bird sits on the eggs, the contact is maintained as long as the thread is drawn tight, and the battery is soon exhausted. After some scheming I have devised what I call the "guillotine release," which consists of a peg, one face of which carries a little plate of metal, in grooves. This plate drops an inch whenever a bird touches the thread; as it falls it slides over two weak springs which are connected with the battery, and thus makes contact between them. But it falls past them, and so breaks contact as soon as it is made. But this is not the place for mechanical details; let me say something about the birds. In most of the subjoined photographs the straw by which the lapwing released

the shutter can be seen if one looks for it carefully, while in the third one the bird can be noticed shouldering it aside. The first two show the ordinarily smooth plumage, while the third and fifth show the female erecting the abdominal feathers



A FEMALE IN GOOD PLUMAGE.

on the eggs (having adopted the usual means of concealment), the female lapwing reappeared very soon, and gradually zigzagged her way to within 3yds. or 4yds. of her nest. But here she caught sight (I think) of the black staring eye of the lens, and flew away from the field with a cry of alarm. In a quarter of an hour she returned, but would not come to the nest, and after some wanderings up and down, she sat moping in the far corner of the field. After two hours of waiting I took pity on her, and came out of my hiding-place and removed my camera. I then constructed a mask of wood, which I carved and stained to imitate bark, cutting an irregular aperture in the middle to correspond to the size of my lens. I returned in a few days and arranged my apparatus at the nest, setting this shield in front of my camera. To my delight the bird came on to her eggs in less than half-an-hour.

In most of the accompanying photographs the bird took its own portrait; that is to say, in approaching the nest or settling on it, it moved a grass stem which was fixed to a fine thread. This was firmly pegged down at one end, and at the other tied (with very careful adjustment) to a



TAKING HER OWN PHOTOGRAPH.



THE MALE BIRD SITTING.

as she straddles over the nest and prepares to incubate. In taking the sixth photograph I set my "trap" with the releasing straw as slack as possible, so that the shutter might not go off till the bird had settled on the nest. After I had got several photographs of the female I became anxious to get the male, who often sat on the eggs. Also, I wanted to get a bird in perfect repose, which was quite impossible with the "trap," so I set out my camera with my release apparatus 4ft. behind it instead of in front of it. I then tied a small stick to 200yds. of line, and laid it on the ground in such a position that, when I pulled the line, the stick came across the releasing thread and set off the shutter. I took the end of the line through a hedge, and left the field for some time. I then allowed the bird to sit until it was perfectly at ease and unsuspecting. Then I crept along the back of the hedge and pulled the line, taking the photograph shown at the top of this page. It is specially interesting that this and the next one are male and female taken at the same nest.

Few naturalists save Mr. Frohawk have noted the sexual differences of the lapwing; therefore these photographs are of value as showing the whitish patch in the black gorget of the female. This patch can be seen in the second, fifth, and sixth illustrations. The male does not possess it. The difference in length of crest is even more noticeable, the male's crest being 4in., the female's 2in. long. The fourth and sixth pictures show this difference very clearly. Of course,



HIS MATE: NOTICE ABDOMINAL FEATHERS.

and gardens—we should be smitten with a plague of insects worse than ever Egypt saw. But they are so unobtrusive and retiring, so averse to having any fuss made over them, that they slip into the country almost unnoticed. Now—this week, and next week, and for many weeks to come—they are dribbling in over half our coast-line with every favouring wind in their thousands and tens of thousands, troubling nobody about their means of transportation and asking none to welcome them.

OUR DEBT TO THE BIRDS.

We know that some birds eat more than twice their own weight in insect food in a day. It has several times been computed that a single pair of such birds as fly-catchers or wagtails, when they have young to feed, consume not less than 15,000 insects a week. How many individual birds there are in the swarms of migrants that come to us each year it would be absurd to pretend to compute; but the members of the swallow tribe alone—swallows, martins, sand-martins, and swifts—must run into some millions at least, and that number is equalled two or three times over by the other small perching birds—warblers, chats, fly-catchers, wagtails, and the like. That the total destruction of insects must amount to many thousands of millions a week in the breeding season (it would probably be safe to say many thousands of millions a day) is evident; and what that means to us, in the preservation of our foliage, our fruit trees, and our crops of all kinds, as well as in the keeping down of the insects, which are a pest to man himself, it is impossible to compute. If you have two pairs of warblers nesting in your garden this spring, and each pair, while



A TYPICAL FEMALE LAPWING.

there are other differences in the sexes, but I only mention those shown in the photographs which I have taken.
H. N. BONAR.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

OUR DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

INCOMPARABLY the most important thing that is happening in England just now is the arrival of the summer birds. It is immensely more important than anything that Parliament is doing; of much greater moment to the welfare of the country than anything that appears in the papers as news of the day. If the daily Press measured the intelligence which it gives by the magnitude of the interests involved, instead of telling us that Lord and Lady Blank had left for Biarritz, it would announce the movements of chiffchaffs and willow-wrens who are arriving to summer in England. What is the flitting of a duke compared to the flittings of the garden warblers? If, for even one summer, our little visitors should change their plans—if the British Isles lost their popularity as a summer resort for fly-catchers and all the other industrious feathered scavengers of our woods

the young are growing up, make between them some 500 trips to the nest daily with a beakful of food (not a single fly or gnat or caterpillar at a time) for the nestlings, it is a moderate estimate to say that you are better off—so far as the success of your fruits and flowers and vegetables goes—by the destruction of a hundred thousand insects in that garden between spring and midsummer.

THE TOO COMMON OR GARDEN CAT.

It is the suburban gardener, the man who struggles with a garden in the immediate environs of London or some other big city, who has most cause to know this, for the curse of the suburban gardener is the plague of small life—insects and "insectoids," like slugs and snails and wood-lice. And the reason why he is so cursed is not the proximity of man himself nearly so much as it is that man will keep cats. The more cat, the more caterpillars. How can we expect to keep warblers in our gardens to eat insects, if in every garden we keep a cat to eat warblers? How can we expect our growing plants to be free from the ravages of snails if once or twice a year we find our cat growling over a mess of thrushes' feathers in the garden, and when once or twice a year each one of our neighbours' cats does the same?

SUBURBAN ENTOMOLCGY.

It was my fortune to spend two summers in a suburban house with a garden—small, but leafy and well-matured. The couple of dozen rose bushes produced each year more tortrices than would have sufficed for all Persia. After midsummer the lilacs would not furnish one spray of green for the flower vases, because almost every leaf was curled up with an anchorite grub inside. In the latter days of July, if you touched the euonymus, the air above became a shimmering haze of the pretty little apple-ermine moth, all silver flecked with black. Through the autumn the buff-tip caterpillars, not content with stripping the elm tree overhead, spilled themselves in every gale by pailfuls on the nasturtiums below; and the way the muslin-moth and buff ermine caterpillars treated the honeysuckle, the clematis, and monkshood was nothing short of scandalous. Even the two or three currant bushes produced a lavish crop of two kinds of clear-wing moths, much to the delight of some juvenile entomologists of the family. But it was hard work gardening, and no amount of syringing and painting and "picking" seemed to make much difference.

THE GREAT HUNTER.

In one year of the two a pair of lesser white-throats did me the honour to nest in my garden. I knew where the nest was—and so, alas! did Bahram, "the great hunter," my Persian cat. And, like most cats, Bahram, though an enthusiastic Nature-lover, is an indifferent ornithologist, and does not care a rap whether a bird is on the "protected" list or not. The white-throats left the nest at a time when I was away, and the housekeeper was made aware of the fact by Bahram turning up and laying proudly at her feet

a dead young white-throat. He was smacked for his pains, but apparently misunderstood the motive of the punishment. He took it to mean that, for some unknown reason, that particular bird was not satisfactory, so he went away and brought another and asked if that would do. Finding the second offering no more enthusiastically received than the first, he fetched a third and a fourth and a fifth, and when I came home Mrs. Bunn had a melancholy row of five little dead lesser white-throats to lay before me. Thereafter the old birds were not seen, and Bahram's day's work probably added to my sorrows by saving the lives of 50,000 caterpillars and other small deer.

ROOM FOR THE MIGRANTS!

My record of the appearances of the migrants in those two years (it was about ten miles as the crow flies from Charing Cross) gave the following dates of earliest arrival: Martin, April 7th; willow-wren, April 8th; swallows, April 14th; cuckoo, April 16th; nightingale and white-throat, April 17th; lesser white-throat, April 18th; wheatear, April 19th. It is, undoubtedly, a most imperfect list, made without any systematic daily observation, but it is enough to show how every day just now the friendly little birds are percolating through the country, drifting across London, where for a little while every suburban garden, each copse and thicket in a park, will have its quota of slim-billed warblers slipping noiselessly about, or stopping now and again to trill to their expected mates. And all the while, save when they are trilling, the slim bills are busy poking into every crack and crevice in the bark, and into each bud where a caterpillar can be hidden. They would stay in those suburban gardens and in those copses and thickets gladly enough if it was safe, for food is very abundant. But there are cats; and so, after a few days, they drift on, leaving toll of their numbers with the cats, and here and there a pair possessed of more than common hardihood deciding to stay and take their risk of bringing off their young near men's dwellings. But the vast majority go on out into the open country, into lanes and spinneys and shrubberies, where, though there are enemies enough everywhere, there is not a cat lurking behind each rose bush, or sunning itself on every garden path. And let us beg for them safe passage and a sanctuary at every point where they deign to stay. Wood-pigeons, rooks, starlings, bullfinches, sparrows—even blackbirds and tits—kill them,

if you will, as for the sake of your own crops and fruit trees you must; but spare the insect-eating migrants and cherish them—the white-throats and willow-wrens, wood and garden warblers, fly-catchers and chats, yellow (or other) wagtails, nightingales and redstarts, and the rest. If you know where they are nesting keep the knowledge sacred from any young one not to be entirely trusted with temptation, for they are working longer hours than ever your gardener works in your behalf.

EARLY CUCKOOS.

The arrival of the bird-migrants does not seem to be either extraordinarily early this year or extraordinarily late. There were a large number of exceptionally early individuals of different species reported; but that would be abundantly explained by the increase in the number of observers, and does not seem to indicate any early general movement. On the contrary, some birds seem to be waiting rather later than in most years; but when the list is finally made up, it will, I think, be found to be about an average year. One point worth noting is that evidence of a reliable character seems to be accumulating in favour of the occurrence of not only early March, but February cuckoos in England. But few of us, perhaps, will ever be convinced, until we have heard one of the early birds ourselves.

II. P. R.

THE HOMES OF THE DISRAELIS.

AT the foot of the Berkshire Downs, and itself on a gentle elevation, there is an old hall with gable ends and lattice windows, standing in grounds which once were stately, and where there are yet glade-like terraces of yew trees, which give an air of dignity to a neglected scene. In the front of the hall huge gates of iron, highly wrought, and bearing an ancient date, as well as the shield

of a noble house, opened on a village green, round which were clustered the cottages of the parish with only one exception, and that was the vicarage house, a modern building, not without taste, and surrounded by a small but brilliant garden. The church was contiguous to the hall, and had been raised by the lord on a portion of his domain. Behind the hall and its enclosure the country was common land, but picturesque. It had once been a beech forest, and



W. J. Clarke. THE LAPWING: MOTHER & NEWLY-HATCHED CHICKS. Copyright.

though the timber had been greatly cleared, the green land was still occasionally dotted, sometimes with groups and sometimes with single trees, while the juniper, which here abounded, and rose to a great height, gave a rich wildness to the scene, and sustained its forest character."

When Lord Beaconsfield thus described in "Endymion" the place which he calls Hurstley, he was seventy-six, and he had achieved an astonishing success as a man of letters and a statesman; yet Bradenham, disguised as Hurstley, was evidently as clearly mirrored in his mind at that moment—at the very end of life—as it was when his father left Bloomsbury Square in 1829, and made a new home by renting an old manor house in the Buckinghamshire uplands. The hold on the younger Disraeli which Buckinghamshire thenceforth always had is as remarkable as the change in the elder Disraeli's life, by the move from London to the Wycombe Valley, is extraordinary. Isaac Disraeli was a man of letters, not of the pensive, poetical kind, but of the active reference-seeking sort—"a complete literary character, a man who really passed his life in his library"—and who in London loved "to ramble among booksellers' shops." In this manner the younger Disraeli described his father in the introduction to the 1849 edition of the "Curiosities of Literature." His work had been largely based on extensive, if not profound, research, and he had been engaged in more than one literary controversy which had made some stir in its time. This active-minded and busy literary worker—a lover, too, of congenial society—suddenly took flight from all his associates and associations to a lonely old country house, then remote, as his son says, from any railway communication, and even to-day, to say the least, secluded and removed from towns and town life. Yet this was not a move into an absolutely strange land, for townsman

though he was, Isaac Disraeli had known Buckinghamshire for many years. Pye, the poet laureate, had about 1802 introduced him to Mr. John Penn of Stoke Park, the grandson of William Penn, who had some appreciation of literature, but, as the hideous monument which he placed to Gray in the field behind the famous church shows, little of art. From Stoke Poges Disraeli gradually became acquainted with the adjoining part of an attractive district, and thus, through the indirect influence of a descendant of William Penn, finally made his home at Bradenham.

To-day, if we choose to go to Bradenham, we see it as it was in Disraeli's days of youth. The place stands somewhat apart from the main road up the Wycombe Valley, on the rising ground under the shelter of the hillside—a secluded little community. The Manor House is still in form the same. The trees around it are probably different, but there are still the striking iron gates, the quiet common, the small adjacent cottages, and the Norman church hard by—a charming rural scene, interesting, as so many picturesque places in South Buckinghamshire are, from its personal associations. At the Manor House Isaac Disraeli led a solitary life, rarely going beyond his garden, and taking no interest in outside affairs; but his permanent good spirits kept him happy, even when hopelessly blind, and he lived on in a tranquil and restful solitude for another nine years.

It was in the early years of Benjamin Disraeli's life at Bradenham that his love of the particular scenery of the Chilterns became an ingrained part of his nature. It was then

were few and restful, and we may very well assume that in his walks about Naphill Common and its surrounding woods he thought out his novels and built those political castles in the air which, unlike most such structures, were ultimately to become facts.

It was from Bradenham that in 1832 Disraeli descended in a political whirlwind as an independent candidate on the astonished little borough of High Wycombe, twice in that year—in June and August—standing unsuccessfully as a non-party candidate, or "independent neighbour," as he described himself, "wearing," as he ostentatiously proclaimed, "the badge of no party and the livery of no faction."

The broad High Street of Wycombe, terminated by its red-brick eighteenth century town hall, is the same now as when Disraeli sought to represent the borough in Parliament. A defiant-looking lion still catches the eye in front of the chief hotel, irresistibly recalling the now distant scene, when, says Disraeli, "feeling it was the crisis, I jumped upon the portico of the Red Lion"—there is an adjacent window from which this place can be reached—"and gave it them for an hour and a quarter. I can give you no idea of the effect, I made them all mad." But to the quietude of Bradenham he had perforce to retire, to continue his musings and his rambles about the hills and woods in the intervals of his meteoric appearances as a Macaroni—as eighteenth century people would have called him—in town. A more singular contrast between the two kinds of life cannot easily be imagined, nor can we well think of one who would be less contented—with his Orientally ambitious dreams—

with the quiet scenes and secluded life of these Chiltern hillsides. Yet if one thing in Disraeli's life is more certain than another it is that these days and places were engraved on his memory and his affections.

At last, in 1837, Disraeli securely made the first political step, and became member for Maidstone, and in the autumn of 1848, after the death of his father, he completed the purchase of the Hughenden estate, which was not far from Bradenham, up another of the small chalk valleys of the Chilterns, and so linked for its remaining years his life permanently with a district and a county with which in the first instance he had become associated by the merest and most unforeseen chance.

Hughenden is not a large place; it is a long, low, yet dignified house, which the surrounding conifers and the beeches hide almost from view, so that its dominating situation on the summit of the ridge is scarcely noticeable. On the north it is sheltered by extensive woodlands; a stone's throw distant

is the pleasant vicarage, and below, on the edge of the park, almost hidden, too, by the sheltering trees, is the church, with its remarkable mediæval monuments, its recumbent knights, links with a long-distant past. The place satisfied Disraeli's feelings, if not for luxury and splendour, yet for space and comfort. Disraeli, I have said elsewhere, "had none of what are called the country gentleman's tastes, but he had that fine sense which finds an enjoyment partly sensuous and partly intellectual in the aspect of the country, in its colour and its stillness, in its variety and its spaciousness, in its old buildings and its historic associations. All these characteristics were to be found within a few miles of Disraeli's home. From Burke to Hampden, from Hampden to Wycliffe, and from Wycliffe to the Norman barons, the county evidenced the formation of the English people, while in the secluded valleys and among the immense beech woods, and on the steep escarpments of the Chilterns, one met with a delightful series of landscapes."

Hughenden henceforth became Disraeli's resting-place, a real intellectual and physical retreat, not, though important persons were often visitors, a political centre as Dropmore or Bulstrode had each been in the eighteenth century, but more resembling in its atmosphere and life, in the owner's enjoyment of his estate, his animals, and his birds, the famous home of Burke at Beaconsfield. It is certainly strange that when the day came for Disraeli to confer a peerage on his wife and subsequently to accept one for himself, he chose neither the title of Hughenden nor Bradenham, but that of Beaconsfield, a place



W. Page.

WHERE DISRAELI USED TO WANDER.

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that he had time to ramble about the hillsides, to see the beech woods in their delicate spring foliage, and in the splendour of their autumn leafage. "It was a still mild day in November, a month which in the country, and especially in the light soils, has many charms. . . . The leaf had changed but had not fallen, and the vast spiral mass s of the dark green juniper effectively contrasted with the rich brown foliage of the beech, varied occasionally by the scarlet leaves of the wild cherry tree, that always dots these woods." It is not difficult to imagine Gray, a pensive scholar, wandering among the "venerable beeches" of Burnham; it is less easy to picture the young Disraeli, full of political and literary ambitions, whose burning desire was to shine in senates and salons, passing solitary hours in climbing the beech-clad sides of the Chilterns. But unquestionably the elms of Eton and the churchyard of Stoke Poges were not more vividly impressed on the mind of the poet than were the juniper-covered commons of Buckinghamshire and the old church of Bradenham on the statesman's memory. Not that the younger Disraeli was at this time only a recluse in the Manor House. "Vivian Grey" was published in 1826, and this book at once gave him some notoriety in London society. In 1830, the year after his father took Bradenham, he made that long foreign tour with the Austens of which his letters to his sister have told us in detail, and from which he returned in 1832. "The Young Duke" was published in 1831, and "Contarini Fleming" in 1832; and in town Benjamin Disraeli was to be met at well-known houses, especially at Lord Lyndhurst's, so that his days at Bradenham

with which, though not distant, he had no personal or paternal connection, and with which he well knew that another and a greater name is for ever associated.

The further we find ourselves from the time of Lord Beaconsfield's life the more vividly we realise how exceptional and how strange it was. What can be more dramatic—bearing in mind personal circumstances—than that in the evening of his life Lord Beaconsfield liked to stroll about the country-side between Hughenden and Bradenham, just as he had done half a century before. The scenes of youth and age, of the days of struggle and fruition, are seldom so closely linked as they are in the case of Lord Beaconsfield, for one can on a summer afternoon see the two houses—the two homes—one can stand by the monument of Isaac Disraeli at Bradenham and of his son in Hughenden Church. You may see the modest monument of the father in one church, outside the other the ornate grave of the son, in which are also laid the two women for whom he was a hero and who helped him so much. Inside, not far from the tombs of the de Montforts, is the tablet—shaded by the insignia of the Order of the Garter—which was erected by a grateful sovereign and friend to her Minister, in some respects the most un-English of men, who is laid to rest in the most characteristically English scenery. Here one may recall his love of the peculiarly marked landscape of Buckinghamshire, its woods, its cherry orchards, its old churches, and its secluded villages—always existing—an ever-interesting psychological fact—behind the most grandiose political ideas, and never destroyed by nights and days of the sharpest political conflict, marking strange contrasts of character, and depths of feeling which it was Disraeli's habit to hide from the world.

E. S. ROSCOE.

BACK TO THE LAND.

FROM ONE POINT OF VIEW.

IT must have struck most people who enquire at all closely into country pursuits, that very little originality or initiative is employed to improve existing methods of making a living out of land and its products. People in the country seem to sink into a sort of groove from which they make no effort to rise, contented to drift with a slow-moving,



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HUGHENDEN CHURCH.

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peaceful current, rather than increase their pace, or create a new channel for themselves by extra effort of brain or energy. Some of the methods of townsmen might well be applied to rural pursuits; but perhaps it is that keen brains grow impatient of the slow procedure and sleepy, unpunctual ways of the dweller *in rure*, and turn to the more strenuous sphere of urban activity afforded by the merchant's office or dealing in stocks and shares. Any opening is welcome, in fact, which enables them to whet their intellectual blades in competition with energy and ability, or affords the possibility of rapidly acquired fortune.

Did one of these ambitious sons of the soil linger a few months more in his native village and set his wits to devise improved methods of working his family holding, he might turn his intellect and energy to advantage in developing any branch of country work which might show signs of responding to a "tonic." There are many fields open to him, to any of which his hand, or rather brain (for the hand can only earn the labourer's dole to-day), might be turned with good prospect of success—a success more easily attained than in crowded cities, where his ability, perhaps superior in his rural home, would be but equal to the average among his fellow-townsmen.

Take an instance which shows how power to turn from the groove can meet with success in a manner open to any farmer in a greater or less degree. Round a market town it will be found there are men who use their best land, not for the old

conservative, time-honoured cereals and roots which form part of the farmer's groove, but for crops which find a ready sale in the shape of market produce which belongs in turn to the market gardener's old groove. There is a man not 100 miles from Windsor who some ten years ago was a small farmer with the average land and crops, also the average profits. Now this man had the wits to see that market gardeners round him found it worth while to grow such things as rhubarb, spinach, strawberries, etc., and to make a living better than his own on a tenth of the acreage. He came to think, I suppose, that he had land of the same sort as they; why, therefore, not do the same, with common-sense to help? He tried, and found that, by the use of the said common-sense, and an outlay in manure and preparation of ground appalling to the British farmer's soul, he could obtain results which, though not perhaps equal to those of the experienced men who had been at it for years,



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THE MANOR HOUSE AT HUGHENDEN.

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C. E. Wanless.

ON A MANX ROAD.

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were still sufficiently good to show him his judgment was not at fault and his idea was sound and had money in it. He had certain advantages he found, too, when the thing was gone into and reasonable common-sense used to divert his mind from the inherited old-fashioned notions. He paid at most £2 an acre for his best land, while heaven only knew what the poor market gardener disbursed in that line. He had a sympathetic landlord, well trained all his life to the task of relieving him from certain percentages of rent. A wet season spoiling his hay or making it a drug on the market, a dry season causing a short crop—both were the cause of reductions at the half-yearly audit if skilfully used. Kind M.P.'s, too, had his cause at heart, and he need never fear lack of sympathy—and practical sympathy, too—against his tyrannous overlord. Also, he had a living from his farming, and these extras were often so much pure profit. These and other things, with the help of his business-like brain, have in ten years raised this small farmer in the world. He owns numerous fine orchards; all the available pasture is snapped up by him; any land which will respond to his now skilful management in growing market crops is not vacant long. Money turns over fast, and much of it sticks. He has capital to buy stock advantageously whenever opportunity occurs, which, after a course of good feeding and attention, soon moves on at a higher price. If one crop is a comparative failure, other branches of his business benefit by prevailing conditions and more than make up for the loss. And with it all he is not so much busier than in the old muddling days, only he works more with his head than his hands now. He has found that it pays him to walk about and watch other people work.

He is, of course, above the average countryman in intellect, but is he so far above the average townsman who has been trained in a quicker school? It is only a question of management and observation when the necessary knowledge of business and gardening is acquired, and this latter does not really require to be vast if the farmer can manage his men. Each foreman or each man may understand his particular job enough to make that pay, and they should be the limbs acting in obedience to the brain—himself. Surely there seems to be room for a possible solution, at any rate in part, of the back-to-the-land problem without resorting to Canada as the only remedy.

There is another side to this question which has money in it, and even more money than the last, but it requires a more capable brain, more ability. This is to "specialise" in one of the numerous branches of our farmer's business, just as the big London doctor specialises in one of the subjects which his country colleague deals with in a capable manner, sufficiently well for ordinary requirements, and to make a good living. There are causes of failure in the farmer's crops which the expert grower of a particular variety might have foreseen or

cured, but which are beyond the farmer's skill; just as there are cases beyond the country physician's knowledge which the London expert might deal with successfully by the light of his deeper search after causes and effects in his speciality.

There is room for every gradation of capacity on the land, equally as in a town, and surely, despite the unemployed, any man who will work and keep steady can earn at least a living wage there. Landlords are kinder, too. What ground landlord in London would build a cottage and let it at a rent returning practically nothing? Lord Carrington has pronounced, it is understood, the opinion, backed by practice in his case, that it is worth the owner's while to do this. A labourer, too, has a more pleasant life, than (for instance) a Smithfield meat porter? Moreover, if he has brains he can get a little land later on, and progress with his ability, until he attain even to be a market-garden farmer.

Let us now consider a "specialist" in country work. What line to choose is the question the aspirant has to decide. There are so many where originality will, when combined with the necessary technical skill and observation, lead one far on the road to riches, that a choice of the best may seem hard. Is this an optimistic view? Hardly, when we have seedsmen in the old mansions of the nobility, breeders of bloodstock coming to own the manor of which their family holding was but a fraction, and sea-kale growers touring the country in their motor-cars. In Tudor days the Spencers, now among the great nobles of the land, seeing their opportunity, rose from small graziers to the greatest fortune in England through sheep-farming alone! There is a branch of the market-gardening industry which, had a young man the brains, energy, and skill necessary, might to-day rival even this achievement.

For a concrete example of an average sort let us take forcing sea-kale for market, which, worked in with other market produce, is the groundwork of more than one good business. A first-rate man can send beautiful tender kale running, in some cases, three sticks to the pound to Covent Garden and sell it, in a hard winter, for as much as 1s. per pound. He would grow some 30,000 sticks to the acre, and if he is an administrator he might have 20 or even 50 acres. The calculation is simple and grossly misleading to the inexperienced or over-sanguine, though the result is possible perhaps to the skilled specialist. The process, by the way, of actually growing the kale consists in preparing the ground by deep ploughing and much good manure; planting the stock, and three times hoeing same; digging up in the autumn, trimming off roots (or next year's stock), forcing in a hothouse in special bins, cutting after about three weeks, punnetting and sending to market—the cost of which can be roughly estimated at once. Charming! simple and easy! But let us now look at the position of a somewhat ignorant-of-gardening amateur who might perhaps be tempted

by the nice profit we have indicated. He cannot expect to reach the expert stage without time, and plenty of it; and let us see what the figures given might turn to while the expert stage is being reached. A mild winter (other vegetables plentiful), ten sticks to the pound, and 3d. a pound in the market, and still only 30,000 sticks to the acre. All this is easily possible—indeed likely—and only loss can result from it. One must remember the expert has a name which has grown with his skill and knowledge, and therefore his goods are in demand. The beginner is not known; no one wants his goods; he has to make his name, even as the doctor, be he never so skilful, must make a name before he can turn his skill to best account.

A great many failures in land enterprises are probably due to the expert stage not being so obvious as in the doctor's case, thus encouraging the aspirant to begin at the wrong end. Were the principles involved in the above facts more generally known, perhaps fewer mistakes would occur. The young man with

some capital, brains, and no experience would not embark at once on a pursuit in which the first qualification is the necessary experience, but would select a branch, or branches, where a *living* can be made without long experience, leaving his growing knowledge and skill to decide whether he has the capacity to become a "London specialist" or remain a "country practitioner."

There are failures everywhere, but it almost seems as if failure is not quite so likely on the land as in the city. Without common-sense it is inevitable in business of every kind, and the rush from the land after the city's gold would seem to the writer due very often to a lack of this quality. If any person meditating trying his luck on the land would take the trouble to test the accuracy of the information in this humble effort to throw some light on the land question of to-day, it might be he would find out enough to start him on the right lines, save much worry, and minimise the loss too frequently attendant on such undertakings.

COLOGNAC.



J. Vanandel.

"SPRING . . . LEADS THE JOLLY MONTHS ALONG."

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THERE is no building in Rome more familiar than the great cream-coloured villa, with its two small square towers, which rises on the Pincian hill against the rich green background of ilex and stone pine, and looks out over the city, across the close-cut grove, under which the fountain splashes into its wide, brown basin, and where St. Peter's is

framed in that famous sunset view, the purple dome against the flaming sky.

Twice a week the heavy gate turns on its hinges to admit visitors; the surly old guard, a French ex-soldier, passes you in. You are on French territory, and you pass up the shadowy way, dark even on a summer's noon, the guest of the French Academy.

To approach the villa, a broad walk runs along a terrace, bounded by a low wall, which in spring and summer is a mass of pink monthly roses. Part of it is now shut in by overgrown trees, but part is kept, as no doubt it all was originally, as a sort of quarter-deck from which to enjoy the prospect to the full. The view from the Villa Medici is not more magnificent to the eye than it is suggestive to the mind. It is the centre of a panorama of Rome, and from it almost every point of interest may be discerned—monuments, palaces, and churches, the Colosseum in the distance, even the far-off aqueducts and the horizon line of mountains. The seven hills may be counted, the columns marked, and Hadrian's mausoleum; and, above all, your attention is claimed by the dome, which seems to be of the city, yet always to rise above every other building. The most beautiful position in Rome was well chosen by Lucullus, by Domitian, by Sallust, for their pleasure gardens. A votive tablet discovered in 1868 proves that the site of the villa formed part of the gardens of the Acilii Glabriones, a family conspicuous in Roman history from the time of the battle of Thermopylae, and of whom two, Maximus Acilius and Priscilla, embraced Christianity about A.D. 152, and were buried in the Catacomb of Priscilla on the Via Salaria. In the gardens of Lucullus, avenues of carefully-cut ilexes, bay, and cypress over-shadowed fountains, and were grouped round temples, shrines, and porticoes garlanded with roses and jasmine. There stood that marvellous Hall of Apollo, where'n Lucullus once feasted Cicero and Pompey at a cost of 50,000 drachmæ. Near by it was that Messalina took desperate refuge, and heard the garden gates behind her being broken down by the centurion Euodus, who came to make an end of her. On the site of the gardens of Sallust, the millionaire historian, the statue of the dying Gaul was found.

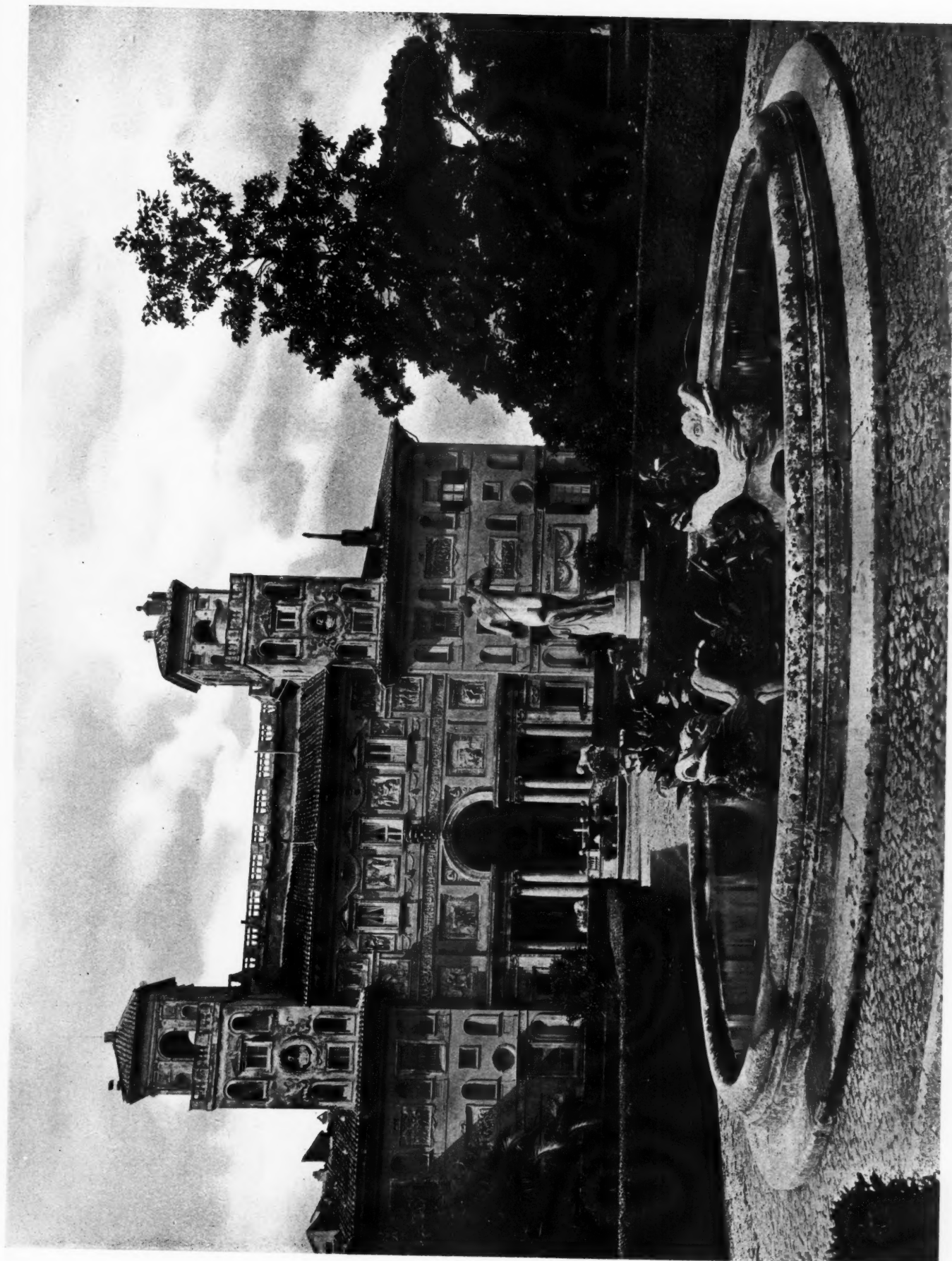
On the eastern side, the villa garden is built upon the very walls of Rome, those walls of Aurelian which were stormed at this point by the Goths, and a gate opened by traitors, when the villa of Sallust was given over to fire and sword, and when its flaming towers gave the light to guide the conquerors to the first sack of Rome. On the south the ground slopes down by gentle degrees in gardens and terraces, and adjoins that to which long ages ago the old senator, Pincius, gave his name, and which is still the favourite promenade of the Romans. From the height of the eastern wall we look down on those slopes where Alaric marshalled his army of Goths, and where on a later day was pitched the camp of



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NATURE AND ART.

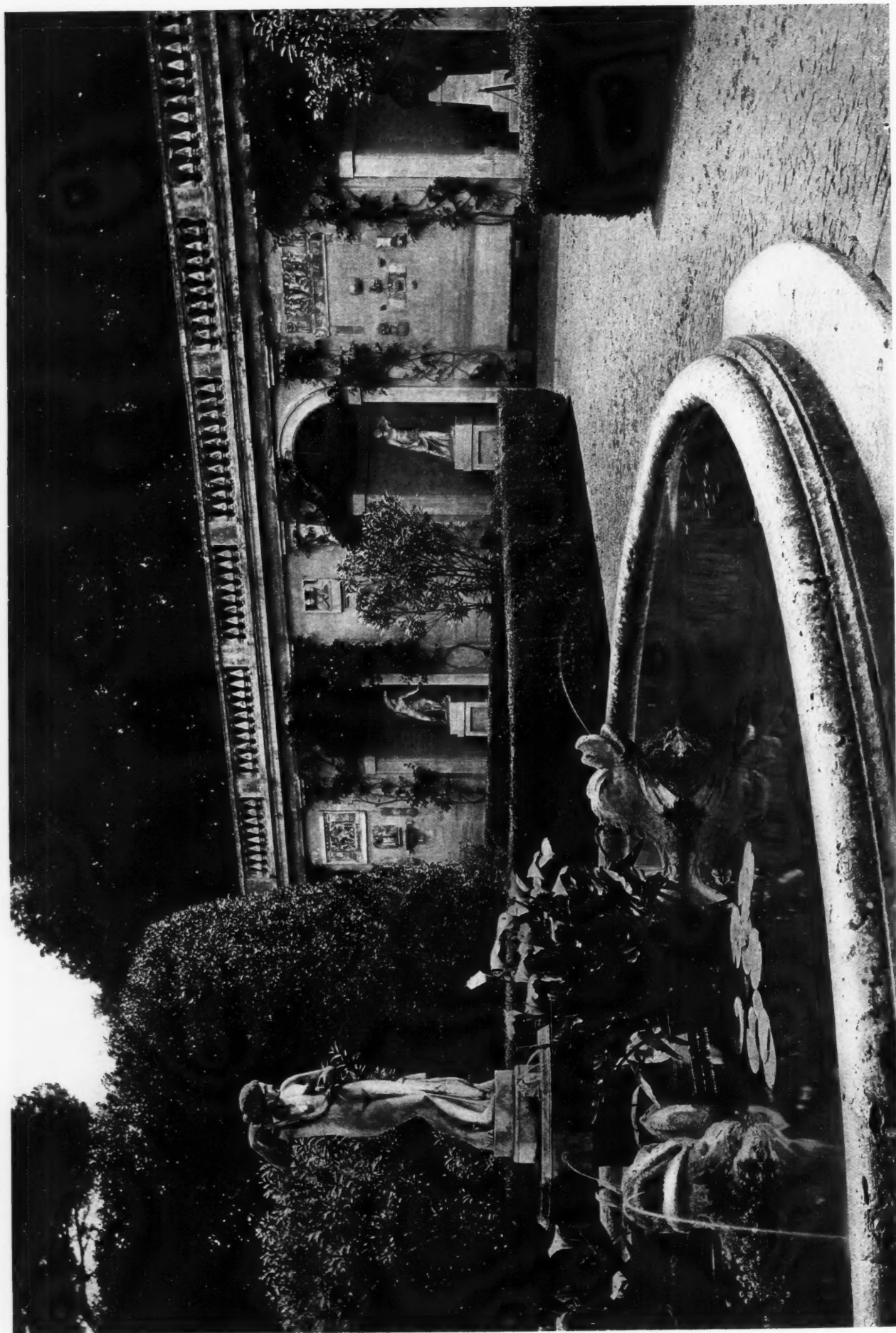
"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE VENUS FOUNTAIN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE EAST END OF THE SOUTH TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



STEPS OF THE LOGGIA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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Belisarius and the Byzantine host. Procopius says, "The greater part of these buildings remain half-burnt, even now in my time." The beauty of those famous gardens perished in 410.

In the fifteenth century the ground on which the villa now stands was partly in the possession of Catherine de' Medici and partly in that of Cardinal Ricci of Montepulciano, and the deed by which Catherine made it entirely hers is still in the possession of the Ricci family in Rome. In 1540 Ricci had laid the first stone of the new building, but its accomplishment was left to Ferdinand de' Medici, one of those ecclesiastical princes of the Renaissance, whose dearest occupation it was to collect the precious remains of antiquity to adorn those delicious villas which remain among the chief charms of Italy. Ferdinand finished it, adorned it with antiques, with paintings and sculpture, planted groups of ilex and myrtle, added fountains, and finally gave it his name.

This prince, who afterwards succeeded his brother as Grand Duke of Tuscany, was one of the most remarkable persons of his age. He was made a Cardinal at fifteen, and as he grew up so used the influence of his position that he practically governed the papal states during the reign of Gregory XIII. When Ferdinand left Rome for Tuscany, the historian Galluzzi writes of him: "If Florence rejoiced at the coming of her prince, Rome groaned at losing him. His kindness, his humanity, his devotion in the time of public calamity, the emulation which his generous actions woke in all around, had made him the object of the people's love and reverence. His disinterested character, his far-seeing intelligence, made him looked upon as the most powerful personage in Rome. No one knew better how to combat the indolence of Pope Gregory, or to moderate the impulses of Sixtus V. His noble air and natural gaiety made him universally beloved. There was always room at his table for men of letters, whom he recompensed generously." He established in Rome a library and a printing-press for Eastern literature. He was one of the principal patrons of Gian Bologna, the famous French sculptor, who worked in Italy, and whose beautiful bronze Mercury used to stand in the vestibule of the villa. This great prince, who, after a happy and glorious reign, died in Florence in 1608, at the age of fifty-nine years, was one of the best examples of those ecclesiastical lords who headed the movement in favour of arts and letters in the sixteenth century.

In a work dated 1750, Pietro Rossini gives us a description of the villa, when it was probably much in the same state as when Ferdinand died. He tells us of the colossal statue of

Rome, that statue which, it is supposed, was one of those which the flames spared when Sallust's villa was burnt, and which, through all changes and vicissitudes, has presided over the garden as it does to-day. He speaks of "fourteen statues representing the story of Niobe" (he means the famous "Niobe and Her Children," now in the Pitti Palace). He speaks of the wood of ilexes through which you ascend to that height, which tradition says was once the Temple of the Sun; and the sixty steps are still there, though the fountain constructed by the Duke of Tuscany no longer exists. Of the splendid lions which stood there, and are now in Florence, one is an antique and one from the hand of Flaminia Vacca. Under the loggia stood statues and the famous Medici vase. The great hall contained a Ganymede, an Apollo, two Venuses, a table designed by Michael Angelo, and among the pictures were a Titian and two by Andrea del Sarto. Another gallery had forty-five antique marbles, busts, and statues. Above the balcony window was an alabaster bas-relief of Constantine the Great. Another writer tells of an obelisk, a porphyry bath, and reports that the ceilings of the second storey were decorated by Sebastiano del Piombo. In this chamber to-day are only wooden panels, but in others the paintings, less precious, of Tempesta and the Zuccari still remain.

Annibale Lippi seems accepted as the architect, and has borrowed some ideas—the Ionic capitals of the garden loggia, the garlands, the gallery—from Michael Angelo. The loggia is upheld by six antique columns, two of granite and four of cipollino, of such beauty that it is difficult to match them, even in Rome.

The outside of the villa, fronting the city, has granite columns, and the great door has a casing of beaten iron, fastened with a thousand round-headed nails. In this sturdy envelope may be described three deep holes, which it is said were made by bullets fired from the Castle of St. Angelo, not in time of war, but as a joke, by order of Queen Christina of Sweden, who had promised to awake the master of the villa by "knocking at his door" to bid him make one of a hunting party.

In the villa, above all, once stood the famous Venus de' Medici. She was exiled to Florence in 1665. It was the one memorable act in a reign of one month of Innocent XI., who was persuaded that the statue was inimical to morality, and ought to be removed from the eyes of Rome. We can imagine a little what the villa was like in its great days by saying that what we now see are the remains of one hundred and twenty-eight statues, fifty-four busts, eight urns or sarcophagi, twenty-eight bas-reliefs, and thirty-one columns of marble.



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THE SOUTHERN TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE GARDEN FROM THE VILLA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE NORTH WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The little chapel of St. Gaetano, which to day is occupied as a studio, in the north-west corner, received its name from the founder of the Order of Oratorians, who, in the fifteenth century, took refuge here with his disciples during the sack of Rome. Discovered by the Spanish soldiers, who were hunting for treasure, he was terribly tortured at their hands. They then seized the Father Paoletto, and hung him by the hair from a tree in the garden. He attributed his preservation to a vow which he made to St. François de Paul.

In 1633-34 the palace served as an asylum to the immortal Galileo, at the time when he had to give an account of his system before the Inquisition. When he discovered the satellites of Jupiter he had given them the name of "Stars of the Medici," and so earned the gratitude and powerful protection of the House. Marie de' Medici, afterwards Queen of Henry IV., passed here a part of her youth. Her room was on the second storey, with windows looking south upon the town. In 1770 the Emperor Joseph II. and his brother, the Grand Duke Leopold of the House of Lorraine, sojourned here for a time, but it was no longer owned by the Medici, and Lorraine and Austria were masters of Tuscany when the great House of Medici flickered out in 1737.

Long before this its splendours had diminished. All depended on one family, and followed the fortunes of its destiny. Towards the end of the seventeenth century the splendour of the Medici concentrated on Florence, and as one Grand Duke succeeded another he thought less of the villa, or only thought of it to despoil it. Niobe and her children were taken to Florence; the two lions went to the Loggia dei Lanzi; the Mercury, the Cleopatra, the vase, all the most precious treasures vanished. In 1798 the Neapolitans pillaged its halls, and the little that was left became less. In 1801 it passed by negotiation to the Grand Duke of Parma, and two years later it became the property of the French Academy, the Directors of which have done much to restore its beauty.

At every step you come across some beauty of Nature or of Art. The whole shrubbery and garden is set in marvellous hedges of clipped box, above which towers the dark velvet of stone pines, sarcophagi serve as basins to the fountains, crumbling statues gleam from niches cut in the thick greenery, huge ancient receptacles for oil or wine stand on pedestals, vases and tubs of lemon trees are placed on richly-carved capitals of broken columns. In front of the garden entrance is a broad gravelled court, in the midst of which is set a fountain overgrown with arum lilies; beyond it lies a formal garden, where oleanders glow rosy in the summer and magnolias make the air heavy with perfume. A charming statue of a dreaming Eros is placed here

upon an old tomb. At the entrance to a long alley, between two columns, supporting an architrave, which once sheltered a famous statue of Cleopatra, is now placed an antique statue of Apollo, which has been restored by the addition of a most beautiful head, said to be of Meleager, and attributed to the hand of Scopas himself. Standing beneath the graceful canopy, with roses rioting all around it, and the dark ilexes as a background, this statue is one of the most striking features of the garden. Velasquez has left two interesting sketches, which are now in Madrid, of the long gallery in the garden, and a fountain with ilexes.

Within the villa it is possible to descend a stair to the depth of 80ft., to where, beneath a heavy vault, flow the crystal waters of the Acqua Virga, which rises eight miles from Rome and feeds many of the fountains.

For a hundred years the history of the villa has been bound up with that of the French Academy. A fine bronze bust beneath the gallery commemorates M. Suvée, the Director at whose suggestion the villa was bought. The Act is dated May 18th, 1803, and is signed for France in the name of the First Consul of the Republic. M. Suvée writes at the end of the year: "I have just transferred the establishment to the new palace; nothing is ready for us, but the impatience of the students, as well as my own, made it impossible to put it off longer."

The French Academy was founded by Louis XIV. in 1648 at the instigation of the great Minister Colbert. Its annals show a long list of famous names, among them Gaspard and Nicolas Poussain, Horace Vernet, Boucher, Fragonard, David, Ingres, Corot. To-day it maintains twenty-four students who have gained the Prix de Rome, and who live here for four years, with a studio and an ample allowance, besides extra sums for materials and travelling. All the students dine together in a large hall, hung with portraits of the former members for a hundred years past. The splendid library is hung with exquisite Gobelin tapestry, the gift of Louis XIV., and his statue and that of Louis XVIII. stand in one of the salons. The tapestries, which are from designs by Raphael and his pupils, had long lain in some obscure corner, but were unearthed by the painter Ingres, and it was Ingres who fastened to the wall so many classic fragments, and who placed plaster models of the old statues upon the pedestals. Copies of the lions and of Gian Bologna's Mercury have been placed where the originals formerly stood.

During the last two years special interest has been re-awakened in some of the bas-reliefs which are sunk in the façade of the villa. Three of these are fragments from the Ara Pacis, the



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THE LOGGIA.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

celebrated altar of Augustus, which is now being excavated from beneath a palace in the Corso. Antiquarians are not without hopes that when the altar comes to be, as far as possible, reconstructed, these fragments may find their way back to their rightful position.

A short stair leads up to the roof of the garden gallery, from which a fine view is obtained of the villa, with its stone pines, and in the distance the heights of Monte Mario and the dome of St. Peter's. Behind this terrace lies a deep, dark ilex

wood, a haunt for fauns and dryads, and through its shades you mount up to where the Temple of the Sun once stood, and where now all Rome goes sooner or later to watch the glorious sunsets. All round the little belvedere the ilexes are clipped into a marvellous *bocage*, which stretches away in a smooth green dome. The sky grows golden and scarlet and fades into clearest green, and before you descend the first lights begin to twinkle among the purple depths of the city lying far below.

THE AWAKENER OF THE WOODS.

By FIONA MACLEOD.

THE Spirit of Spring is abroad. There is no one of our island coasts so lone and forlorn that the cries of the winged newcomers have not lamented down the wind. There is not an inland valley where small brown birds from the South have not penetrated, some from Mediterranean sunlands, some from the Desert, some from the hidden homes on unknown isles, some from beyond the foam of unfamiliar shores. Not a backwater surely but has heard the flute of the ouzel, or the loud call of the mallard. The wren, that sweet forerunner of 'the little clan of the bushes' as we say in Gaelic, *clann bhicag' nam freas*, the robin, the mavis, the merle, have been heard in every coppice and wildgrowth from the red combs of the winding Dart to the granite-ledges by the rushing Spey. From the last Cornish upland to the last brown moor on the Ord of Sutherland the curlew and the lapwing have wheeled with wailing cry or long melancholy flutelike whistle. The gorse, whose golden fires have been lit, has everywhere heard the prolonged sweet plaintive note of the yellowhammer. In the woods the woodpeckers call.

The white tides of Blossom have begun to flow. The land soon will be inundated. Already a far and wide forethrow of foam is flung along the blackthorn hedges. Listen . . . that chaffinch's blithe song comes from the flowering almond! . . . that pipit's brief lay fell past yonder wild-pear! In the meadows the tit-larks are running about looking in the faces of the daisies, as children love to be told. On the fenlands and mosses the windy whimper of the redshank is heard like the cry of a phantom; and like a 'bogle,' too, is the perturbing drumming of the snipe falling swiftly on sloping wings back to the marsh.

The shores, the meadows, the uplands, on each there is a continual rumour. It is the sound of Spring. Listen . . . put your ear to the throbbing earth that is so soon to become the green world: you will hear a voice like the voice which miraculously evades in the hollow curves of a shell. Faint, mysterious, yet ever present, a continual rhythm. Already that rhythm is become a cadence: the birds chant the strophes, flower and blossom and green leaf yield their subtler antiphones, the ancient yet ever young protagonist is the heart of man. Soon the cadence will be a song, a *pæan*. The hour of the rose and the honeysuckle will come, the hour of the swallow hawking the grey gnat above the lilled stream, the hour when the voice of the cuckoo floats through ancient woods rejoicing in their green youth, that voice which has in it the magic of all springs, the eternal cry of the renewal of delight.

True, one may as yet more universally see the feet of Spring, or the blossom-touch of her hands, in the meadows and by the shores, than in the woods. She passes by the hedgerows or along the pastures, and her trail has the sheen of gold. Do not the celandine and the flaming dandelion, the pale cowslip and delicate crowsfoot, the jonquil and daffodil, the yellow of the broom and the bee-loved gorse, everywhere show it? She goes by the upland meadows, and touches the boughs of the wild-apple or leaning pear, stoops by the quince or the wild-cherry, and the white foam of the miraculous wind that is in the hollow of her hand is left upon the branches. The slim gean at the edge of the woodland catches the spray, the twisted crab is as an old woman suddenly become a lovely girl cream-white and rose-flusht. Or she goes down the island-shores, or by the brackened coasts of inland lochs, or along the overhanging brows of streams, or where brooks glide between grassy banks; or, facing northward, she wanders where the hill-burn falls from ledge to ledge, or leaps past the outswung roots of mountain-ash or birch, or steals between peaty grasses where the wren has her nest in the pendent bramble and the greenfinch calls across the fern. And wherever she goes the yellow iris is left by her feet, the yellow-white willow-catkins have become musical with a myriad bees, dust of gold has fallen into the milk-white snow of the countless clans of the daisy, tides of an invisible flood have foamed along the hawthorns, the wild crocus has shone like the spear of Pisarr, the buttercup is brimmed with golden wine, and even the kingcup-ingots are melted in the waters—for whence else can come that flowing gold which is blent with yonder moving emerald that is as the breath of the grass, yonder floating azure as of droned speed-

wells, yonder wandering violet, child of shadow and the wind, yonder mysterious phantom of pale mauve which tells that a becalmed cloud-ship drifts on the deeps of heaven.

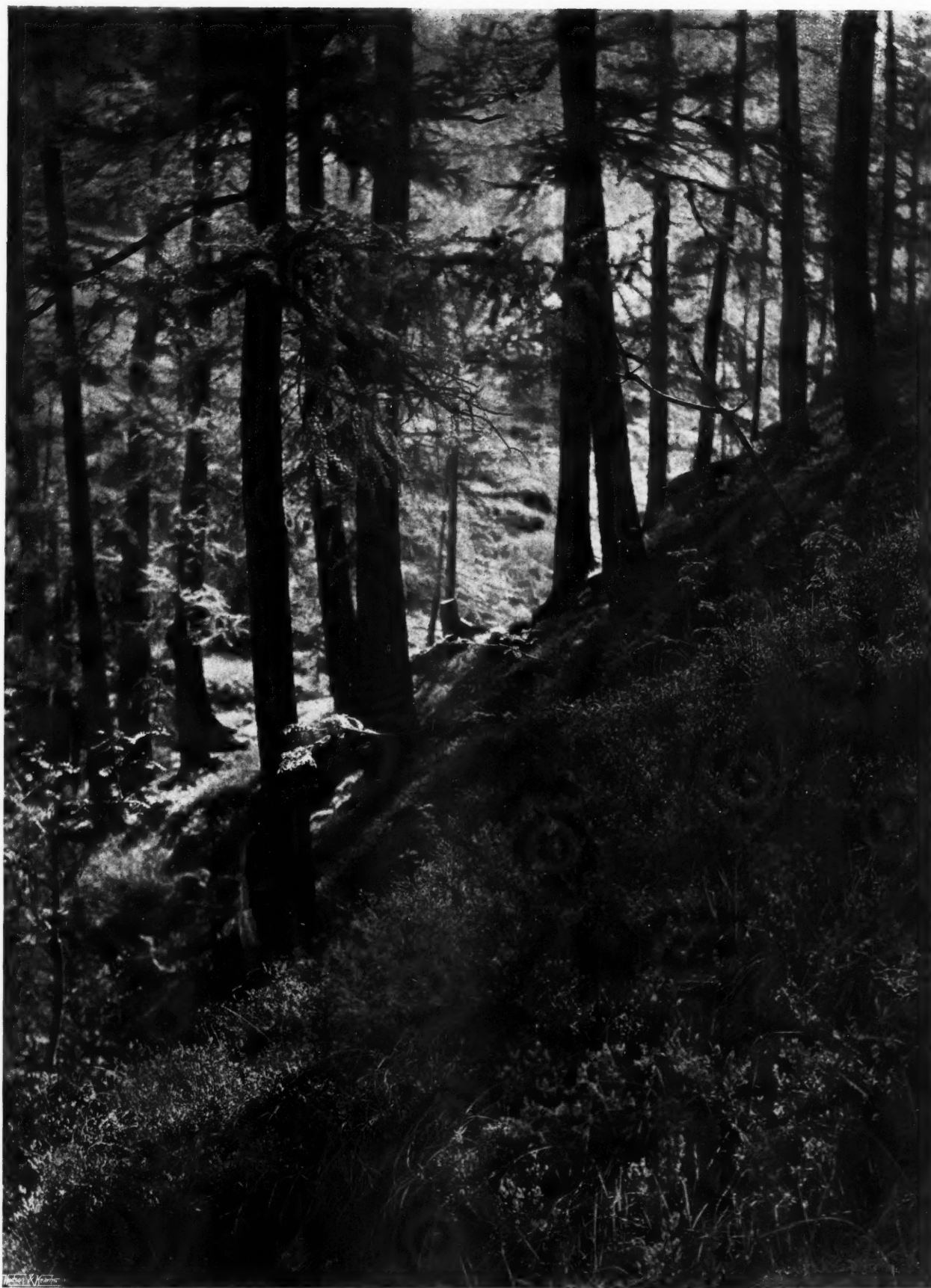
Nevertheless it is in the woods that the miracle may be more intimately seen. The Presence perchance is not universally abroad so much as immediately evident. A hand touched that larch yonder, for why is it so suddenly green, with a greenness as of a seawave, or as the wet emerald crystal one finds on the sands of Iona, or, rather, with the softer, moister, the indescribable greenness of the rainbow's breast? A foot leaned upon the moss beneath that vast oak, on whose southern slopes the russet leaves still hang like a multitude of bats along dark ragged cliffs: for why has the cyclamen suddenly burned in a faint flame, there; why has the sky suddenly come up through the moss, in that maze of speedwells? Who rose, yonder, and passed like a phantom westward? Some one, surely, of the divine race, for the tips of the sycamore-boughs have suddenly burned with a bronze-hued fire. Who went suddenly down that mysterious alley of dim columnar pines, stirring the untrodden silent ways? For, look, the air is full of delicate golden dust. The wind-wooer has whispered, and the pine tree has loved, and the seed of the forests to come floats like summer-dust along the aerial highways.

But what of the Forest-Awaker? Who is he? Her name, is it known of men? Who can it be but the Wind of the South, that firstborn of the wooing Year and sweetheart Spring? But what if the name be only that of a bird? Then, surely, it must be the wood-thrush, or perchance the cushat, or, no, that wandering Summer-herald, the Cuckoo! Not the skylark, for he is in the sunlight, lost above the pastures: not the merle, for he is flooding the wayside elms with ancient music of ever-young love: not the blithe clans of the Finch, for one and all are gypsies of the open. Perchance, then, the Nightingale? No, he is a moonworshipper, the chorister of the stars, the incense-singer before the altars of the dawn: and though he is a child of the woods, he loves the thickets also. Besides, he will not come far north. Are there not deep woods of silence and dream beyond the banks of the Tyne? Are there no forest-sanctuaries north of the green ramparts which divide Northumbria from the glens of Tweed and the solitudes of shadowy Urr? Are there no inland valleys buried in sea-sounding woods beyond the green vale of Quair? Alas! the sweet Songmaker from the South does not think so, does not so dream. In moon-reveries in the woods of Surrey, in starry serenades along the lanes of Devon, in lonely nocturnes in the shadowy groves of the New Forest, he has no thought of more vast, more secret and impenetrable woods through which move mountain-airs from Schiehallion, chanting winds from the brows of the Grampians: he has no ancestral memory of the countless battalions of the red pine who throng through the wilds of Argyll to look on the grey shoreless seas of the west, these green pillars which once covered the barren braes of Balquhiddy, the desolate hill-lands of the Gregara, and, when the world was young, were wet with the spray of the unquiet wastes wherein are set the treeless Hebrides.

No, in the North at least, we cannot call the nightingale the Forest-Awaker. In truth, nowhere in our land. For he comes late when he comes at all. The great awakening has already happened. Already in the south the song-thrush, the dandelion, the blackthorn-snow are old tales: far in Ultima Thule to the north-west the gille-bride has whistled the tidings to Gaelic ears, far in Ultima Thule to the north-east the Shetlander has rejoiced in that blithest thicket-signal of spring, the tossed lilt of the wren.

It is of the green woodpecker I speak. We do now know him well, most of us: but then most of us are alien to the woods. Town-dwellers and homestayers know little or nothing of the secret signals. It is only the obvious that they note, and seldom read in the great Script of Nature anything more than the conventional signature of certain loved and familiar names and tokens.

It was in the Forest of Fontainebleau I first heard the green woodpecker called by this delightful name, the Awakener of the Woods, *le Réveilleur de la Forêt*. My French friend told me it was not a literary name, as I fancied, but one given by the



C. D. Kay.

THE RENEWAL OF DELIGHT.

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foresters. And how apt it is. In the first weeks of March—in the first week of April, it may be, as the scene moves northward—there is no more delightful, and certainly no more welcome, sound than the blithe bugle-call of the green woodpecker calling through the woods for love, and, after long expectant pauses, hearing love call back in thrilling response, now a flute-note of gladness, now a challenging clarion-cry. True, whether in the vast forest of Fontainebleau or in our northern woods, the woodpecker is not so readily to be heard in the inward solitudes. He loves the open glades, and commonly the timbered park-land is his favourite resort. Still, save in the deepest and darkest woods, that delightful rejoicing note is now everywhere to be heard fluting along the sunlit ways of the wind. It awakes the forest. When the voice of the wood-

an unknown remote waste under the star Septentrion, he and his son reappear, though now his name is Tapio and Faunus is become Nyyrikki.

O Nyyrikki, mountain-hero,
Son of Tapio of forests,
Hero with the scarlet headgear,
Notches make along the pathway,
Landmarks upward on the mountain,
That the hunter may not wander.

Still does Nyyrikki, or Pikker as he was called by the northmen long before the *Kalevala* was wrought into Finnish runes, make notches along the pathways of the woods, still the huntsman on the hillsides sees his signals on the oak-boles. Perhaps to this day the Esthonian peasant offers in his heart a prayer to Pikker the woodpecker-god, god of thunder and storm, so god too of the glades and fields where these can devastate—a prayer such as that which Johann Gutsloff, a Finnish author of the seventeenth century, cites as the supplication of an old Esthonian farmer: “. . . Beloved Pikker, we will sacrifice to thee an ox with two horns and four hoofs, and want to beg you as to our ploughing and sowing that our straw shall be red as copper and our grain as yellow as gold. Send elsewhere all thick black clouds over great swamps, high woods, and wide wastes. But give to us ploughmen and sowers a fertile season and sweet rain.”

In Gaelic lands many an old name has been dropped from common use, because thus associated with some shy and yet never-far divinity, and so too the Finn and the Esth ceased to call the woodpecker Pikker (a word so strangely like *Picus*) and thus it is that now the peasant knows him only as *Tikka*. With the Romans, *Picus* the god was figured with a woodpecker on his head, and all of us who have read Pliny will remember the great store laid by the auspexes of Rome on the flight and direction and general procedure of this forest-traveller. Recently a sculptor, I know not of what nationality, exhibited in Paris a statue of the Unknown Pan, and on his shoulder perched a woodpecker. Was this a reminiscence, or ancestral memory, or the divining vision of the imagination? I have some fifty pages or more of MS. notes dealing with the folklore and legendary names and varying ways and habits of the fascinating woodlander, from his Greek appearance as *Pelekas*, the axe-hewer (Aristophanes calls him the oak-striker)—whence no doubt ‘*Picus*’ and ‘*Pikker*’ and ‘*Peek*’ and the rest—to Latin *Tindareas*, mortal father of

Leda, to the White Woodpecker, the magic bird of mediæval legend, to ‘*der olle Picker*,’ the horrible laughing god of human sacrifice in ancient Prussia, to *Pak-a-Pak*, ‘the lost lover of the woman in the oak,’ in a strange tale I heard once in the woods of Argyll. But of all this I would recall to-day only that tradition of the woodpecker which describes her (she is a wise-woman in the folk-tales) as knowing where the spring-wurzel grows, that mysterious plant of Pan and the sun with which one may open the faces of cliffs with a breath, as did the deer-mother of Oisín of the Songs, with which too one may find the secret ways of Venusberg and behold incalculable treasure.

For hark! . . . *Pak-a-Pak*, and the long cry of love! It is answered from the listening woods! Here must ‘the spring-



Copyright.

THE DAWN OF SPRING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

pecker is heard it is the hour for Nature to celebrate her own Ides of March. Elsewhere the song-thrush and the skylark have been the first heralds. Even in the woods the missel-thrush may have flung a sudden storm of song out on the cold tides of the wind swaying the elm-tops like dusky airweed of the upper ocean. But, in the glades themselves, in the listening coverts, it is the call of the green woodpecker that has awakened the dreaming forest.

And what an ancient old-world tale *Picus* could tell. For, in the long ago, was he not *Picus* the antique Italiot god. A forest-god he was, son of ancient Saturn, and himself the father of that beautiful being of the woods, Faunus. And how far he wandered from Thracian valley and Sabine oak-grove . . . for in that far northern Finland, which to the Latins was but

wurzel' grow . . . here, for sure, are the green palaces of Venusberg, here, at very hand, are the incalculable treasures of the awakened Forest.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THE novel of province has now been written for nearly every part of Great Britain. Blackmore did it for Exmoor, Thomas Hardy has done it for Wessex, and most of the other localities of England have each had their local chronicler. The difference between this form of composition and what may be called the cosmopolitan novel is in part only a question of local colour. The breadth of view of the artist must count for more even than that, and this must be kept in mind in criticising such a book as the one before us, the latest production of Horace Annesley Vachell, *The Face of Clay* (Murray). The scene is laid in Brittany, and the work itself is saturated with the folk-lore, the superstitions, beliefs, and customs of the inhabitants of the wild Breton shore. Yet the peasants are in a sense painted more from without than from within. The heroine of the book is, as she loves to call herself, "Bretonne Bretonnante"; but she leaves her native land at the early age of fifteen, to come back ten years afterwards. During the interval we are asked to believe that, owing to one of those inscrutably brilliant successes that, to tell the truth, occur more frequently in fiction than in real life, she has attained the highest distinction as an artist. Yet she returns to the village with the fresh virginal feelings of the Breton peasant woman unimpaired. Not that she belongs to that class either; her father was an artist and her mother a native of the province. It is in the midst of a colony of artists that the action takes place, and Brittany is continually reflected as seen through their eyes. The most conspicuous figure is one dear to the female writer of fiction. Michael Ossory is a genius, as a matter of course, and having fallen in love with a girl of fifteen, remains true to her during a decade of absence; but he has in the interval committed a moral crime, which has the double merit of being the pivot on which the story turns and of illustrating in a singularly vivid manner one of the most striking characteristics of the native girl. His ruling passion at the opening of the story is art, and his ambition is to paint a great picture. How overmastering is his love of paint is shown in an opening scene. The girl's much-loved father has been drowned in a storm, and upon hearing the news she turns in despair to Him whom she has been piously taught to seek in the hour of affliction:

Straightway they fell upon their knees on the bare floor. The wind shrieked outside, the booming of the breakers never ceased as those simple prayers went up. Michael knelt upright; Téphany abased herself, crossing her bosom with trembling fingers, moving her lips, looking upward in passionate supplication. Presently Michael got up, and then a curious thing took place. The young man stared intently at the face of the kneeling girl. At first the sympathy and pity so plainly inscribed upon his features were good to behold. But as he looked these vanished, and a different expression usurped their place. An eager, almost greedy, light gleamed in his hazel eyes; his fingers twitched nervously. Withdrawing furtively to one side, he whipped a notebook from his pocket and opened it. Then, as if realising that he was about to commit a sort of sacrilege, he flushed scarlet. Téphany, half turning, saw the sketch-book at the moment that he was thrusting it back into his pocket. With a sharp cry she sprang to her feet, confronting him with flashing eyes and blazing cheeks.

While the maiden is working her way into fame as an operatic singer he is struggling to achieve a great picture. It is taken for granted by all the artists in the book that the only sure method of winning the way to greatness is by painting the nude; but the Breton girls are nothing if not modest. The land is haunted by painters, many of whom are no better than they should be; and so it has come to pass that a girl who poses meets with the contempt and derision of her friends and companions. Our artist, however, finds an exceedingly beautiful, young, and modest girl who, to put the whole matter briefly and bluntly, falls in love with him and is easily persuaded—first to devoid herself of her coif so that he may paint her hair, then, bit by bit, to sit for "the altogether." In all this Ossory has been guided solely by the instincts of a painter. He looks upon the girl simply as material for a picture, and, as far as can be gathered from anything in the book, has never felt even the slightest passion to trouble his artistic soul. She discovers eventually that she loves without being loved, and the first result is to develop in her a recklessness, so that she is ready to sit for anybody and everybody; but this is but a passing fever. The end of her tragedy is that she drowns herself in her despair. As a physician who figures in the book very properly says, "In Nature there are no rewards and punishments, but only consequences"; and the consequence to this artist is that he becomes for a time one of the lost. When the girl Téphany, from whom he had parted, returns a mature woman of twenty-five, who has had decided artistic success, it is to find that the young man whom she had left behind, and who had unaccountably ceased corresponding with her, has become

prematurely old—a gigantic, shabby, unkempt, romantic figure. His experience has taught him, or at least he thinks it has taught him, that the production of a great work of art is an achievement infinitely less than that of finding happiness in a good woman, and so he is paralysed by remorse, and the work of the novelist is to show by what tiring and difficult steps the icy mind is thawed. It forms an interesting study, and yet somehow we feel towards the end a certain repulsion. The usual wedding-bells ring in the last page, but it is for a man whose future lies behind him, who has, in the homely English phrase, "shot his bolt"; and the woman too has lost something of her early freshness. In spite of the author's obvious intention, she has become an operatic singer, and we seem to feel that no experience of wifehood or motherhood is likely to bring with it the freshness and beauty that naturally come to a woman whose love has been fulfilled without the intervention of this desolating period. The other figures in the book are well painted, and yet want a something of trenchancy and poignancy to make them actually living and breathing. The author seems to play a little with Yannik, a pathetic little peasant girl, who is in danger of following in the footsteps of her whose death mask provides a title for the book. We seem to know that she is in love with the American painter who had induced her to pose for the figure. This man is not quite consistent. At the beginning he looks like a very perfect and noble gentleman, who loves the heroine to such an extent that for her sake he is willing to trample his ambitions under foot, even foregoing the pleasure of painting Yannik in deference to the modest prejudice of his lady love. But almost in the final scene he acts very much as a cad would, because, on finding that she has accepted Ossory, he tells the story of the moral suicide:

Seeing Carne's convulsed face, Michael had hoped that a simple statement of the fact would be best. Carne confronted Téphany.

"You have taken him?"

His disordered appearance so troubled her that she had difficulty in finding breath to stammer out: "Ye-es."

"Then you cannot know that he has done what you most abhor?"

Téphany was looking at Carne; otherwise she would have seen Michael start forward, open his mouth, and then, with a violent effort, control lips and tongue.

"What is that to you?" said Téphany.

"I am answered. You do not know. What Ossory has done is nothing to me, nothing; but it may mean everything to you."

"How did you find out?" demanded Michael, heavily.

Even in that moment of supreme tension Téphany observed that the life had gone out of her lover's face and voice. The dreary tone fell dismally upon a brief silence.

"Yvonne gave me a part of the story, not much; enough to excite my curiosity; the rest I got from a man I know, who is painting at Port Navalo."

This is not at all consistent with the previous conduct of the brilliant young American, and it would certainly have been more artistic if the author had endowed him with a chivalrous silence. It was unworthy of a gentleman to make the enquiries he did, and for that reason we do not feel convinced by the sentences with which he is dismissed:

Then Carne knew that he had lost her, and the knowledge of this loss evoked strength. Clinton Carne walks out of these pages a better man than he entered them, and a finer artist. He will paint a great picture some day, and when he has painted it he will know that the quality which has raised him above his fellows, the power of interpreting what lies beneath the surface, the sympathy and insight which the best judges rate so highly—all these distinguishing characteristics of his work will have grown from a tiny seed of humility planted in his soul upon a grey morning in a studio upon the old Concarneau road.

Probably this is being hypercritical. The book may be read from beginning to end without a moment's cessation of interest. It may very well be that others will not experience quite the same sensations as the present writer, whose duty, however, is to describe the impressions produced on himself as candidly and vividly as lies in his power.

THE OLD ROOKERY.

THE other day I met with a very disagreeable surprise. Allured by the beauty of the spring, I had returned to a place that was rich in youthful memories. It used to be, in schoolboy days, a typical English dene, with rough banks that shelved downwards to a purling stream. Here high beeches grew upwards, and the ground beneath them was bare, save for dry sticks and withered leaves, and here and there a clump of rough fern. It was, however, a pleasant place in which to spend days during the olden time. The earth falling away from the steep banks had exposed the roots of the trees, and in the bare network, thus left open to public view, rabbits found a hiding-place, and the wrens and robins sites for their nests. At the very bottom of the dell, down which an almost invisible streamlet trickled its way over stones, and became lost under the masses of dead branches and leaves which had been brought down during floods, thrushes, for

some not very apparent reason, loved to nest. Perhaps they were in the habit of discovering food in the moist channel. At any rate, their nests were the commonest to be found there; but the place was full of adventures for the questing schoolboy. It was a great home of owls, and for miles off one could hear them hooting during the autumn and winter nights. Nor did they maintain a very strict seclusion during the day, as it was quite common



W. Money-Kyrle.

AN ACHING VOID.

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for one to come with its soft sweeping flight down among the trees even in bright sunlight. You could easily follow it from place to place, because, led by the blackbirds and thrushes, all the choral inhabitants of the wood joined in a mad chase, as though they thought the duty of the owl was to remain in strict privacy during the day, and that he had no business to emerge except when the shades of night were falling. That was the fanciful; but it is difficult to find the real reason. Naturalists tell us that small birds mistake the owl for one of their enemies, in which they would seem to labour under a great delusion, because, though a bird of prey, the owl does not commonly feed himself on his feathered friends. But, at any rate, the theory will not hold good. In this wild and neglected plantation there were two or three pairs of sparrow-

fly into a tree on one branch of which a wood-pigeon was cooing to his mate, while on the topmost bough a thrush was piping his loudest song. Yet at the approach of the enemy the wood-pigeon did not cease to coo, and the mavis continued to sing unconcernedly. This was but another illustration of a phenomenon common enough in natural history. Animals that devour their neighbours when hunger compels them to do so

can still live on friendly terms with them, as when the fox and the rabbit live in the same covert, or when a single burrow holds these two animals, together with the badger. Even in a river I have noticed that when a pike lies, as he often will do, basking in the sun, or even remains almost perfectly still at the bottom of a stream, the little fishes on which he commonly feeds go about their own business without any apparent sense of fear. But to go back to our owl. It is probable that the reason why the tiny songsters assault him is simply that they find him to be something strange, for it is curious how they hate the abnormal. When a strange bird, even of their own species, comes among them, the universal instinct is to greet him with pecks and buffetings. If anyone doubts this, the experiment can easily be tried of carrying a sparrow a few miles from its native haunts and then liberating it. Unless capable of defending itself with beak and claws, it will under such circumstances have a very bad time from its own kith and kin, and will be treated just as cruelly as a strange fowl is when admitted to a pen of birds hitherto unacquainted with it. We used to think that the tawny owl must be subject to some mysterious and fatal disease, for dead bodies of this bird, which is so little, and yet looks

so large with its fluffy feathers, were found more frequently than those of any other inhabitant of the woodland. We are referring, of course, to the little brown or wood owl; the white barn owl was occasionally seen in the daytime also, but its appearance was so unusual as to be marked with a red letter in the calendar. Next to the owl the squirrel was the most interesting inhabitant. A great many of them at all times of the year seemed to delight in descending from lofty trees, where they usually lived, and hopping about the ground, the playfulest and the most cunning little animals that one can imagine, scurrying off with immense speed when thoroughly alarmed, and dodging and hiding like the shy, wild creatures they are. It was easy to discover their nests, because these were seldom made in the drey that they build high up among the trees; they seem to prefer holes much nearer the ground. It was a somewhat risky undertaking to put one's hand into the place, because the squirrel, picturesque as he is, possesses very sharp teeth and claws, and can use them with effect.

Yet there is no more delightful pet for the schoolboy. If you only catch your squirrel soon enough, and, if necessary, procure a foster-mother for him in the domestic cat, he can be brought up to be the most affectionate and playful pet imaginable. The cat and he are capable of becoming great friends, true though it be that she will without scruple kill a squirrel on the lawn if a chance be offered. Should the young squirrel, however, ever have mounted a tree, it is hopeless to expect that he will ever be kept tame; he may be kept in captivity, where he will, if anyone is so cruel as to require him to do so, turn a wheel; but his temper will ever be sullen and suspicious. Well, it may easily be imagined that the wood in which so many youthful interests were centred held an important place in the memory. Indeed, we have not mentioned all of them, for the gay procession of flowers has been left out altogether. The primroses, snowdrops, and daffodils, the laburnums that grew on the edge, and the delicate harebells that grew among the grass, and out of which the fairies might well have produced music—these and a hundred other objects of interest are now

but a remembrance; yet, when we went back, there was little to stir up these old thoughts. The ancestral acres on which the plantation stands had passed through several hands in the meantime; and the latest of these owners—a young sportsman suffering perennially from shortness of funds—had cut the noble beeches down. Never, as far as I can learn, had this been done before. The record of the wood goes back for many hundreds



W. Money-Kyrle.

EMERGING FROM THE NEST.

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hawks, treacherous and deadly enemies of the small birds that nested there every year; and though there was evidence of many a tragedy enacted by them, in bunches of feathers and drops of blood left on the ground where a kill had taken place, I never on any occasion remember to have seen the sparrow-hawk mobbed. On the contrary, it was noticed that the birds often seemed to lay aside their natural enmity. I have seen a sparrow-hawk

of years, but the old policy had been to thin and replant—never to cut it down altogether; and I cannot help thinking that this was the better plan. The ground is not possible for agriculture, and, as a matter of fact, after the beeches had been removed a large number of spruce and fir trees were planted. They do not look natural to the situation, however, and one doubts much if they will be profitable, because nowhere round about do coniferous trees thrive, and in any event the old rookery is no more. The birds, of which there are innumerable quantities in the district, must have been dispersed through the neighbourhood. They cannot find a tree on which to build here now; yet how well does one remember their history! How in the windy days of October they began carrying sticks, and making believe it was spring, and mending their nests. During winter they came in great black clouds, flying over the fields, as darkness descended, to roost in the depths of the wood. Here it was, too, that in spring they had their tournaments, fights, their courtships, their dallies, until, the nest having been chosen or built, the eggs laid and hatched, one was rejoiced to hear the shrill cawings of the young birds, cawings that went on until the beginning of May, when it was the common practice of the villagers, with a singularly large variety of gun, to take their one great day's sport of the year in shooting the rooks. The onset could not, however, have been very deadly, for when the year swept round again as many rooks as ever seemed to be homing on the cold nights of January, and when in March they began to follow the ploughman's furrow.

M. A. H.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL . . . RACQUETS CHAMPIONSHIP.

BY EUSTACE MILES.

IN the first days of this competition there was not a single really exciting match. It is true that the victory of Eton over Harrow was rather unexpected, but the play itself was scarcely interesting. Until the final, on Friday, April 20th, Charterhouse and Wellington had won their ties without difficulty. A good struggle was looked forward to by the many spectators, including some of the veterans of the racquet court, amongst others Mr. H. M. Leaf and Major Cooper Key.

The Charterhouse pair had been coached by that keenest of amateur players, Mr. F. Dames Longworth, whose service is so severe that after it no boy ought to be frightened of any service at all. Mr. Dames Longworth's back-hand stroke is also fast and strong. The Wellington pair had been coached by the school professional, Hawes, whose all-round game and power of adapting his play to his pupils deserve all praise. Hawes has



W. Money-Kyrle. THE OLD ROOKERY: THE FIRST CLIMB.

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not been well backed up by the Wellington masters, but his efforts have been as energetic as ever. The Wellington court differs from the Queen's court, which gives too much advantage to service. As to the physique of the pairs, Hooman was the most robust of the four, and he alone seemed to take the game as a game. While he played up as hard as anyone could wish, serving well and keeping alert yet cool, he looked as if he enjoyed himself. It seemed almost like sacrilege to smile cheerily in that cold square pit. His partner, Garnett, was of the loose-limbed and free build. Brougham was neatly built yet strong. His partner was very slight and not very active.

Now, the secret of the double is calmness and safety. Granted a certain amount of skill and knowledge of the partner's play, and the pair that play for safety usually win. Safety is most conspicuously important when one's partner is serving. Then is the time for the player to hit well above the board, and not risk a brilliant shot. He must do his best to keep the server in. If the server cares to risk a brilliant shot and put himself out, that is the server's concern. In this match the players were—after the first game, when Garnett was quite "out of it"—much

more mindful of this policy than is usual in Public School or any other racquet doubles. Another unusual feature in the match was the taking of the service. It was not that the service was weak; Hooman and Brougham served well, and Garnett also. But the players used discretion in volleying, so that there were plenty of long rallies. Then, again, the partners played well together. There was scarcely any poaching, and there were very few misunderstandings.

In the first game it looked as if Charterhouse were bound to lose. Wellington, thanks to Garnett's misses, secured a fine lead; but Brougham made an unusual number of mistakes, and Hooman kept his nerve most cheerfully and pulled the game out of the fire. This saving of the apparently lost game was, I think, the turning point in the match. For though the Wellington pair won the second game easily—far more easily than their opponents had won the first game—they somehow fell to pieces, and Charterhouse won by four games to one. The result was rather unexpected. I am inclined to think it was largely due to Mr. Dames Longworth's untiring efforts and enthusiasm, and his recent victory in the Amateur Championship Doubles; partly also to Hooman's excellent work, and Garnett's improvement in the

service and rallies—at times he was brilliant; partly also, I should imagine, to the lack of match-practice by the Wellington pair. For a marker, even a splendid and keen player such as Hawes can never quite give boys the special practice that a match against an amateur pair gives. Then there is another cause. When a school is keen on the school racquets and on the success of the pair, as Charterhouse is, the pair become used to playing amidst the applause which is otherwise



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ON FRESH PASTURE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

somewhat disconcerting. Under the conditions at Queen's, when almost every point won draws down a small thunder of stamping and clapping and shouting, a boy must keep his head to play well. This is what Hooman did. Somehow it seemed as if Brougham did not; he took the items too seriously. In these games temperament tells. I have never seen a boy-player so near the ideal of sport, the blend of good temper, and great keenness, as Hooman was on Friday. At times all the players hit round the walls; but that is always the case when there is a sort of vague idea that the hardest hitter is likely to win. Strokes which a boy brings off quietly in his own court, when scarcely anyone is looking on, he does not risk in important matches. This is, perhaps, why Brougham, who, I expect, is the best of the four in an ordinary game, failed to come up to his reputation, while the Charterhouse pair maintained the good level which they have shown in their ordinary games.

One of the morals of the match—and of nearly all Public School matches—is that the mind and temperament should be taken into account in the choice of school representatives. Another is that too much reliance should not be placed on service. Brougham's service failed, and he had not enough play to fall back on. He lacked safety and sureness.

On the whole, the Charterhouse pair are to be heartily congratulated, and most of the other schools are to be—the reverse. I fear that the Public School masters are not encouraging the game as they should do. It is grand for the eyes, nerves, and physique.

FROM THE FARMS.

LORD CARRINGTON'S COTTAGES.

MR. MAURICE F. BEADEL, who some time ago indulged in some forcible criticism of the cheap cottages erected by Lord Carrington, has returned to the charge in a letter which was published in *The Times* of April 18th. With all desire to give what he advances the most reasonable consideration we cannot help thinking that he is hypercritical. Indeed, much that he says is behind the times. He points out, for instance, that the cottages at Castlethorpe "were approved by the Board of Agriculture, and are therefore exempt from the control of the rural district council." Of this particular council we know nothing,

but it is certainly astonishing to hear it urged as a fault that the building of cottages was arranged in a manner to avoid their being brought under the surveillance of the very stupid building byelaws now enforced. Mr. Beadel must know that a Bill is before Parliament at the present moment for the purpose of modifying or abolishing these regulations, which, in the opinion of all who are qualified to speak, have done more harm than good to architecture. It is not our purpose to go through the list of trivial objections raised by him, but one or two of the points have more than a particular interest. For instance, Mr. Beadel objects that only one bedroom has a fireplace, and says, "the absence of any fireplaces in the two back bedrooms is a serious defect." We do not believe anything of the kind. As a matter of fact, a cottager earning from 12s. to 16s. a week cannot afford money for the fuel to keep fires going in bedrooms, and if he could afford it he would gain nothing by doing so. Who does want fires in bedrooms? It is much healthier to sleep, as many of us do, during the whole of the year with the windows wide open. As a matter of fact, the one bedroom that has a fireplace is utilised only in cases of sickness. To people in ordinary health, whether they be peers or peasants, a bedroom fire is a perfectly superfluous luxury. Unless Mr. Beadel can advance stronger objections than any he has yet put forward to the construction of these cheap cottages, it would be much better for him to hold his tongue. Certainly he is doing no good to the labourers, many of whom cannot find sleeping accommodation within several miles of their work, and would be only too glad to have such cottages as are being put up by Lord Carrington.

FARMING AND THE FEEBLE MINDED.

A project has been mooted by Princess Christian and other influential people connected with the National Association for the Feeble Minded which is heartily deserving of support. Among the feeble minded there are undoubtedly many who would be happy doing a certain amount of farmwork,

and the association has formed a scheme for acquiring about fifty acres of land in a part of the country where it would not be difficult to enlarge the area if necessary. Only persons over school age would be admitted, but they would be of either sex, and it is proposed that the men and boys should be employed in agricultural or other manual work, such as boot-making, basket-weaving, etc., while the women and girls would attend to the garden, the house,



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A GROUP OF SOUTHDOWNS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and the laundry. Of course, the scheme would have the great advantage of giving these unfortunate persons employment that they could do, and at the same time afford them the advantage of expert advice. Some £10,000 will be wanted to carry the idea out efficiently, and one trusts that no insuperable difficulty will prevent the subscription of this modest amount.

THE DAIRY IN APRIL.

At the beginning of April much anxiety was caused by the long-continued drought, which kept back the growth of fresh grass usually expected in that month. Fear of a water famine, however, proved to be groundless. Before the middle of April arrived, rain began to fall in considerable quantities, and though the meadows and pastures are still a little backward, they have improved immensely during the last ten days, and the prospects are now good. Indeed, the fields are beginning to assume their wonted summer aspect, as the hedges

are now green, and the cattle allowed out to graze. There are plenty of calves, but they are not largely visible yet, as the system of allowing pedigree dams to nurse their offspring has been discontinued. While speaking of pedigree stock, it is satisfactory to have to report that during the first three months of the year a record was established in the export trade. In the three months ending March 31st 800 cattle had been exported, as compared with 625 in the corresponding period of last year, and there was a corresponding increase in value. Another item of information that will interest dairy farmers is that the fine herd of cattle belonging to Mr. Hugh C. Smith and Mr. R. H. Cobb of Mount Clare, Roehampton, Surrey, is to be sold, or at least a choice selection from it, by Messrs. John Thornton and Co., on Saturday, April 28th. There are some very fine Jerseys in this herd, and lovers of the Channel Island breed of cows cannot afford to ignore it.

SHOOTING.

PHEASANTS, AND LAST YEAR'S EPIDEMIC.

FROM accounts which we receive from correspondents in different parts of the country it would seem that the present season is up to a fair average in the matter of the egg-laying of the pheasants; and one of these, who has had many years of experience in the breeding

of pheasants on his own property, contributes the following note on the epidemic which proved so disastrous on many properties to the pheasants last year. It does not profess to suggest a positive remedy, or to throw a distinct light on the nature of the mysterious disease, but, at least, it clears the ground by stating and discriminating the main points of the problem. He refers in the first place to the apprehensions which many people very naturally feel about receiving in exchange, for the purpose of obtaining fresh blood, cock pheasants from any properties on which the disease is known to have been prevalent. On this head he remarks:

We can hardly believe that the disease can be transmitted hereditarily. The old birds do not seem to suffer from it in pens; they do not seem to carry, convey, or transmit the germs; it seems an ailment that old age is pretty well exempt from in the case of pheasants, though perhaps not in the case of barn-door fowls. The question occurs whether the disease, whatever its nature, can be conveyed to the young pheasants through the malign influence of old farmyard hens that sit upon the eggs. Many of these come from ground soiled and fouled enough to spread disease of this type. Then the question arises whether it remains in the soil. We know of cases in which they have had it two or three years running on the same estate, and it has then disappeared. This would seem to indicate that it remained in the soil. But, again, we may point to instances which seem rather to indicate the reverse: e.g., when enteric was not locally rife, in 1904, one estate suffered severely from unaccountable enteric; but in the following year, when nearly everyone all round suffered severely, for the first time for many years, from its devastating effects, this same estate enjoyed immunity. (N.B.—The birds, of course, were not reared on the same ground, but were put into the same woods as before and fed on the same racks.) Evidently, it is very difficult to take effective precautions against the disease so long as we do not know its exact nature and origin, whether it is transmitted hereditarily or derived from the farmyard hens, whether it is in the air or in the soil. As evidence in support of the latter contention, it is noticeable that in a dry rearing-time, when enteric is rife, a shower of rain arrests its progress.

It may be said with reference to the last comment that it appears, perhaps, equally possible that the rain may have arrested its progress if it were in the air as if in the soil. Until we know a good deal more than we do at present about both grouse disease and the pheasant epidemic, it would be very unsafe to argue at all from the one to the other; but it is at least worth notice in this connection how very often a burn is the dividing line between a diseased and a healthy stock of grouse. Of course, a burn runs down the angle of a valley, so that the hills on the one and on the other side of it respectively have different aspects—that may be the explanation of the different hygienic conditions on the two sides—but if it should be the case that the germ of the disease is in the soil, the fact that the river checks its progress would be still more easily intelligible.

Of course, people will tell you that the nature of grouse disease is an obvious affair—that little worm with the terrific name, *Strongylus pergracilis*, doing all the mischief—but that is the kind of explanation which does not take us far in a practical direction, though, doubtless, it is a move in the right direction, and a move further than we have gone with our pheasant trouble.



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A LORDLY STRUT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

BAMBOO AS COVERT.

A CORRESPONDENT, commenting on some of our remarks as to the best covert to grow under trees to shelter pheasants, and to prove not too attractive to the rabbits, reminds us that in some parts of Ireland this combination of qualities is found to be well furnished by the bamboo. It is, at all events, covert that the woodcock seem to like very well. He suggests that it might be useful in many other places. In some others, and perhaps in many more than we should suppose until the experiment is made, it might perhaps be serviceable, though we doubt if even the hardiest kinds would be quite hardy enough for the East Coast; and it is to be remembered, too, that the test of its rabbit-resisting properties is not a high one in a climate so mild as that of those parts of Ireland where the bamboo coverts prevail, for the appetites of the rabbits never get as sharply set there, nor their food so scarce, as in countries where frost and snow are more severe and continuous. Moreover, the bamboo, as is very well known, has the habit, fatal to its permanent success as a covert-making plant, of dying down when its term of years is ended, not in single plants, but in entire species, and requiring to be reproduced from seedlings. With such a prospect before him, no one is likely to spend much time or energy on the bamboo merely as a means of producing a covert.

SHARP WEATHER FOR PHEASANTS.

There have been some severely sharp frosts at the time of the pheasants' laying, but, it is to be hoped, not sufficiently hard to have injured the eggs. A prevalence of east wind, such as we have been experiencing, is not at all the best of weather for the sitting-time. Poultry have not been hatching out at all well in consequence of it, so we must hope for more genial conditions all round.

GROUSE BUTTS.

Now that the heather-burning-time is over, the nesting begun, and the hill drying after the winter rain, the keeper and his men have leisure that often cannot be employed better than in the remaking, repairing, and alteration of grouse butts. Where deer in any number come down in winter on the moor they are certain to amuse themselves with knocking the butts about. Sir Allan Mackenzie, at Glenmuick, has a very good way of reducing the damage that deer and sheep can do by covering all the upstanding part of the butt with wire-netting fastened close down on the ground. When the grass grows it comes up through the netting, and shortly before shooting-time the

men go up and shear off the long grass from in front, whence the grouse will come to the butt, and this precaution is said to act so well that the butts so protected require hardly any attention or repairing at all from one season to another. Of course, it is rather expensive in the first instance, and more or less implies an ease of access to the butts, in order to avoid excessive labour in conveying the netting to them.

NEW STYLE OF BUTT.

Apart from this, however, which is merely in the nature of repairing and replacing that which has been damaged by storm or accident, there is a general conviction growing that the old type of butt in most common use is not quite ideal. It is not proposed here to go into all the much-discussed pros and cons of the question whether the grouse, seeing the butts, are turned aside by them. It is enough that the advantages of the more sunken butt, with no more than eighteen inches or a couple of feet—of which the first object-lesson was given at the Mackintosh's at Moy—above the surface, are beginning to be considered worth studying, and that butts of the old



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AN AIRING FOR THE FOSTER-MOTHERS. "COUNTRY LIFE."

upstanding type are being changed into butts of a less conspicuous fashion. The way of making these sunken butts is to dig them out to such a depth that, given a rise in their sides of 2ft., say, above the general lie of the moor, a man of average height can just be at such a level as to shoot from them with comfort as he stands in them. This gives a good measure of their height, or depth. Then, when the earth is taken out, it had best be piled or spread before the butt—that is to say, on the side from which the birds are expected to come—in a gradual slope up to the highest point of the wall of the butt, so that, when the heather has grown on it, the butt will be absolutely invisible. It will appear no more than a slight natural rise in the moor when seen from the point of view of the oncoming birds. In interior form the butt should be circular, with a diameter of, say, 5ft. on the floor and 6ft. on the top. It is not possible to make the sides quite sheer in a crumbly soil, for, if you did, they would soon fall in. Unless the gradient of the hillside is considerable, such butts are bound to act as water-pits, and it is therefore necessary in most cases to lead a drain away from them, to take the water off; and it should be noted that such drains should be shelved off at their sides, as should all drains on the moor, so that, if a young bird happen to fall in, it has a chance of scrambling out again before it is drowned. Where it is very boggy, it is a good plan to floor the butt with a plank or two.

POSITION OF BUTTS.

It is quite likely that the keeper or the guns may have noted, in the past shooting season, that birds were not coming forward as they should at one or other point of the shooting-line; and where this has been found to be the case, an improvement may often be made by moving the position of the butt. A very few yards are sometimes enough to make all the difference between the birds coming on and turning aside, according as they catch sight of the apparition of the head and shoulders of a gunner and his loader above the heather a minute sooner or a minute later. In the former case they may have time to turn aside; in the latter, they may have come too far, may have committed themselves too completely to a certain flight, to change its direction. With respect to the position of the butts relatively to each other, we have reason to believe that we have arrived at the final maximum of wisdom. First, they must be in a straight line. If one is over a brow, so as to be out of sight of its neighbour, its line should be indicated by a conspicuous white stone or other object which will catch the attention quickly; and, secondly, the modern fashion is all for massing the butts very close to each other—in some cases with no more distance apart than 15yds. On the old plan the idea was to put them as far apart as possible consistently with allowing no bird to pass between any two of them without coming into range from one or the other. Later experience, as well as a little reflection, prove that many more shots can be obtained by massing the guns very much more closely across the line of the birds' flight. Therefore, on every moor where the arrangements have not already been brought up to the latest requirements there is plenty of work to be done with the grouse butts, and no better occasion than the present for getting it done.

STORING WATER.

While noting that ditches should be cut shelving, in order to allow birds to climb out, it should be observed, too, how very much is done on a well-ordered moor in the way of storing water by blocking back little rivulets so

as to form small reservoirs which do not get dry in a time of drought. For young grouse it is immensely important that water to drink should be near at hand. The old birds know this, and will not nest on a tract of moor where there are not some rivulets which can be trusted to endure through all but the most abnormally dry times. But on a part of a moor where they had not previously nested for years and years grouse have been induced to nest, and been enabled to bring up healthy families, by blocking back the small natural streams in the way suggested so as to form little reservoirs of drinking water in the dry time. This is very well worth the attention of those keepers and owners of moors who have not yet learned its value by experience.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MONGOLIAN EGGS WANTED.

SIR,—With reference to your article "Shooting: In Praise of the Mongolians" in your issue of April 7th, can you tell me to whom I should, or may, write for eggs of the half or the pure bred Mongolian pheasants? How many eggs is it best to put under the sitting hen, and is the treatment, feeding, etc., of the pheasant chick different from that best for the ordinary type?—ESSEX RESIDENT.

[In reply to this and to other correspondents writing in the same strain, we fear that it will not be possible for them to get any more of the half-bred Mongolian eggs this year. From Mr. Russell of Hempton Lodge, near Hythe, Kent, the chief breeder of the Mongolian crosses, we hear that he is quite sold out, and that he has booked orders for over 10,000, and he does not know of any breeder who still has any half-bred eggs for sale, although he adds that quarter-bred eggs, at £5 a hundred, could be obtained from the Cranbrook Game Farm, Marden, Kent; and Mr. Russell himself has still some three-quarter-bred eggs and some versicolor crossed eggs to sell. Lord Ernest Hamilton, from Shantock, Bovingdon, says that he is sold out of half-bred eggs, but "will have plenty next year." The case is the same everywhere. With regard to the question asked by one of our correspondents relative to the number of eggs of the half-bred-kind that a hen can cover, Mr. Russell states that he "generally puts seventeen eggs under a good-sized hen, and a less number under a smaller hen or bantam. The chicks want no especial treatment. I have personally reared some, for the sake of experiment, without the use of eggs, and as you can see from Lady Dunleath's letter, her poultryman reared them on plain chicken food." Since the above was put into type we have received a further letter from Lord Ernest Hamilton, in which he says that although he has no half-bred Mongolian eggs at present, he will have about a thousand for disposal on May 16th and later.—ED.]

THE SUPPLY OF ENGLISH PHEASANTS.

SIR,—Being an old subscriber of COUNTRY LIFE, I have taken the liberty to address a letter to C. E. M. Russell, Esq., care of your paper, hoping that you are able to forward it, as I could not make out the address of the said gentleman from your interesting article about Mongolian pheasants issued April 7th, 1906. I subscribe through the Kittler'sche Verlags-Buchhandlung, Hamburg, and I would be very much obliged to you, too, if you could give me, either by letter or by one of your next numbers, the address of reliable English firms where I could buy either English pheasants' eggs or live pheasants; also the titles of several good books on pheasant-breeding.—TONIO N. RIEDEMANN, Hamburg.

[The books which we should recommend to our correspondent are the COUNTRY LIFE Library of Sport "Shooting," Vol. I.; the Badminton Library on "Shooting," Vol. I.; and "Pheasants: Their Natural History and Practical Management," by W. T. Tegetmeier. In our reply to "Essex Resident" our correspondent will find his last question answered as well as we are able.—ED.]

THE WILD TURKEY.

SIR,—Some years ago I think you published an account of several owners of large estates who intended introducing into their woods turkeys to become wild for shooting purposes. Can you tell me with what result, or where I shall be able to find particulars, or give name of a gentleman who tried this?—T. BROWN, Hinwick Estate Poultry Farm, Wellingborough.

[The wild turkeys do not fly very well. At Leonardslee, Sir Edmund Loder gets them to come high overhead; but that is an exceptional situation, in consequence of the coverts hanging to the sides of valleys. In a flat country they do not give very good shots.—ED.]

LITERARY NOTES.

THOSE who like to read a novel that is at once out of the common rut, and written in a style that has character, will do well to read *Lady Baltimore* (Macmillan), by Owen Wister. It may as well be explained that Lady Baltimore is not a person, but a cake. "Oh, my goodness! Did you ever taste it? It's all soft, and it's in layers, and it has nuts—but I can't write any more about it; my mouth waters too much." The second phrase used in regard to it by the author might be very fairly applied to his book: "But, dear me, this is delicious!" The scene is laid at Kings Port, and the story pictures a society stretching upwards and downwards, from the multi-millionaire to the girl behind the counter. However, it is not for that that we advise the reading of the book, but rather for the pleasant, whimsical manner in which an

author of very great literary ability sets forth the knowledge of the world that is evidently the result of much observation and experience. He has an extremely good eye for cranks of all kinds, and perhaps the following may give some idea of this capacity. It is a thumb-nail sketch of a poor bride's father:

"A queen's estate should have been hers," he said. "But what! 'Who steals my purse steals trash.' And he sat up, nobly braced by the philosophic thought. But he soon was shaking his head over his enfeebled health. Was I aware that he had been the cause of postponing the young people's joy twice? Twice had the doctors forbidden him to risk the emotions that would attend his giving his jewel away. He dwelt upon his shattered system to me, and, indeed, it required some dwelling on, for he was the picture of admirable preservation. "But I know what it is myself," he declared, "to be a lover and have bliss delayed. They shall be united now. A soldier must face all arrows. What!"

I had hoped he might quote something here, but was disappointed. His conversation would soon cease to interest me, should I lose the excitement of watching for the next classic; and my eye wandered from the General to the water, where, happily, I saw John Mayrant coming in the launch. I briskly called the General's attention to him, and was delighted with the unexpected result.

"Oh, young Lochinvar has come out of the West," said the General, lifting his glass.

"I touched it ceremoniously with mine. "The day will be hot," I said; "The boy stood on the burning deck."

We have received from the Lavender Press, Sheep Street, Wellingborough, a refreshing little book called *In My Garden*. It is a convenient note-book, with space for recording garden events, and the amateur gardener will find it very useful.

The Story and Song of Black Roderick, by Dora Sigerson (Moring), is a tale of Gramarye of some old unhappy time which is not indicated. All that we know is that it is a period of rival chieftains apparently in some Celtic race of men. The moral is obviously Aucassin and Nicolette. At least, the narrative contains the same admixture of prose and verse. It is done in the style that the Neo-Celtic writers have made so familiar, and the authoress has been successful in creating an atmosphere of mystery and miracle. The story is that of a fair young bride wedded to a grim and gruesome earl, who evinces no love for her until after her death. But as a great deal of the action takes place in heaven and hell, with a *dramatis personæ* of good and evil spirits, the interest goes on till both are fairly out of torment, and safely landed in the Celtic equivalent to the meads of Asphodel. The best way to show the character of the work is to give examples alike of the prose and poetry. We select them not because they are the best, but for a certain completeness. Here is the story of the bride rendered desolate by the cruel indifference of her husband. She has wandered out to a hill, and an aged crone tells what has taken place:

"Once called she on her father, as one who drowns in deep waters would call upon a passing ship. Twice called she upon her mother, as one would call upon a house of rest or of hospitality. Thrice called she upon Earl Roderick, as one would call at the gates of Paradise, there to find rescue and love."

"And said she naught else?" said the Black Earl, his head upon his breast.

"Yea," quoth the crone, "when she called upon her father she smiled

"Now," quoth she, "my mother sleepeth, and now my father. And now by all am I forgotten." Then did she steal, in the dim light, down from the hill, and I saw her no more."

From the many pieces of verse intermingled in the story we select the following as the best and most characteristic:

"O whisht! I hear the banshee keen,
All woeful is her cry.
She comes along the gray boreen—
Pray God she pass us by.

My wee Conneen is pale and weak,
I hold him to my side;
The rose is white on Sheila's cheek
Since her young lover died.

The little children from their play
Creep to me full of fear!

"O whisht! the banshee comes," they say:
'Whom does she weep for here?'

But Sheila leaves my chair to go,
And flings the shutter wide;
'Be it for me,' she whispers low,
'The banshee keened and cried.'

God be between our house and harm,
For trouble comes full fleet.

I hold the babe close in my arm;
The fairy in the street."

CORRESPONDENCE.

PHOTOGRAPHING AN APRIL SNOW-SHOWER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Twice during the present month the heavy showers which are characteristic of it have fallen in the form of snowflakes of great size. Sunday, April 1st, was the date when the accompanying photograph was taken. The time was 4 p.m., and the light decidedly weak, from a photographic point of view, the sky being of a uniform dark grey, and the sun within two hours and a-half of setting. The camera used was a half-plate of the reflector type, in which a mirror throws a full-size image on to a ground-glass screen on the top of the camera, thus enabling the operator to compose and focus the subject up to the moment of exposure. The shutter was of the kind known as the focal plane, consisting of a blind with a narrow slit in it, which passes rapidly over the face of the plate. It was set, in this instance, to give a speed of about 1/3000sec. The lens was also one designed for high-speed work, having the large aperture technically known as F5.5. Owing to the suddenness of the phenomenon there was no time to make special preparations or select suitable surroundings, the exposure being, in fact, made out of my study window. I do not remember ever having seen a photograph of falling snow, and certainly never expected that anything but some blurry streaks would appear on the plate. It is easy to fake a negative to show falling snow by carefully spotting the flakes in with a fine brush, but the

result is very different from the genuine article, as seen in this example. A lens of such large aperture, designed to admit a great deal of light, is unavoidably shallow in focus unless stopped down. This explains why those flakes which were close to the camera are out of focus and look like woolly balls, but this is in itself a conclusive proof of the genuineness of the photograph. A similar shower occurred last Tuesday morning, April 24th, at 8.15, when I succeeded in getting two more negatives, but, unfortunately, the largest of the flakes had fallen before I could get ready.—
BASIL CRUMP.

OWLS IN DAYLIGHT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Every lover of birds must agree with the writer of "Wild Country Life," who was regretting, a short time ago, that we cannot study owls in the daytime, as we do other birds. It is very tantalising to live for years amongst brown owls, as I have done—to hear them, night after night, "loudly to the moon complain" outside my window—and yet never to be able to see them except, on three or four occasions, a passing glimpse in a dim light. I also sometimes hear them hoot loudly in the daytime, at all seasons of the year, but especially on very bright, sunny days in the summer. However, "all things come to him who waits," and about a fortnight ago I was lucky enough to "catch a brown owl napping," or, rather, sleeping very soundly. I was walking through our coppice one morning, in brilliant sunshine, when I happened to glance at an ivy-covered tree about half-a-dozen yards from the path. Close to the trunk, and half hidden by a screen of ivy, was what appeared at first to be a stump, but thinking that it looked rather speckled, I examined closer, and found that it was a brown owl fast asleep. He presented a most comical appearance, as his face and back were both turned towards me, his head being turned completely round. I sat down and proceeded to inspect him closely through my glasses. After a while I wanted to see him move and open his beautiful eyes, so I hooted loudly, and called



Basil Crump.

AN APRIL SNOW SHOWER.

through her tears. "Didst thou know I perish," quoth she, "thy arms would reach to save me!"

"And when she called twice upon her mother, her mouth smiled even the same, "for didst thou learn my hunger, thy heart would warm me to life again"; but when she called three times upon Earl Roderick, she paused as though for an answer, and smiled no more. "Thee," quoth she, "I perish for, I hunger for. Thou lovest me not at all."

"So did she sit and make her moan upon the hill, and here watched she the lights in the far windows of her lost home quench themselves one by one.

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out "Ker-wick! Ker-wick!" like the young owls. He did not move a muscle. Then I barked like a dog. He slept calmly through it all. Then I moved slightly. The rustling sound—though so slight compared to the other noises—caused him to turn his head to one side, but still he did not open his eyes. Finally, I scrambled to my feet. This awoke him at last, and he flew off instantly in fine style. What a chance this would have been for a photographer! A better "sitter" could not be imagined, and I greatly regret that I was not able to take his portrait. However, I shall never forget his quaint aspect and venerable appearance as he slept, in fancied security, behind the picturesque screen of ivy leaves.—IDA NORMAN, Strode Manor, Beaminster, Dorset.

BLINDNESS IN PIGEONS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A pair of white fantail pigeons in this village (Walkington) hatched two young ones about ten days ago. One is a fine bird; the other, smaller, but apparently healthy and perfect, but for the fact that it has no eyes, and is absolutely without a vestige of any—just the empty sockets, clean and healthy-looking, but giving it a most weird appearance. I should be interested to know whether you or any of your readers have met with a similar case, and if you would advise the killing of this bird. It will, of course, never be able to feed itself.—MINNIE DAWE.

[The case you describe appears to be one of congenital blindness, and is certainly of sufficient interest to be worth preserving. We would suggest that the bird should be sent either to the Royal College of Surgeons, or to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, for inspection. Probably one or other of these institutions would like to retain the specimen. We certainly can see no reason for keeping the bird alive, and would suggest a painless death, as by chloroform.—ED.]

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SWALLOW.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of May 20th a year ago a letter appeared, signed "Lichen Grey," giving dates from his note-book of the earliest appearance of the swallow in Northumberland. Below I beg to hand you extracts from my diaries of the earliest dates upon which I have seen the bird in this district. You will observe that upon two occasions I have seen very early arrivals, viz., in March. The latter of these, 1905, coincides with your correspondent's early notice of April 5th of the same year. My latest date



TEMMINCK'S TRAGOPAN.

is April 18th (twice); and here, again, in 1903, I agree with "Lichen Grey's" latest date of April 29th. In 1872 I first saw the swallow on April 14th, but during the five years following I regret to say I omitted to make an entry.

1878	...	April 12	1893	...	April 11
1879	...	" 11	1894	...	" 10
1880	...	" 14	1895	...	" 10
1881	...	" 10	1896	...	" 13
1882	...	" 13	1897	...	" 5
1883	...	" 10	1898	...	" 8
1884	...	" 9	1899	...	" 4
1885	...	" 15	1900	...	" 16
1886	...	March 28	1901	...	" 8
1887	...	April 14	1902	...	" 4
1888	...	" 15	1903	...	" 18
1889	...	" 14	1904	...	" 6
1890	...	" 15	1905	...	March 29
1891	...	" 18	1906	...	April 11
1892	...	" 10			—OBSERVER.

MR. CHAPLIN AND CANADIAN CATTLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I totally deny that the real objections to the admission of Canadian cattle were stated in Mr. Chaplin's letter to *The Times*. The real objections

were stated in the House of Commons by Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. C. Wason, and county members when they said it would ruin their constituents. It is not Canadian disease, but Canadian competition, that is feared. Mr. Chaplin gives a very interesting and correct description of the characteristics of foot-and-mouth disease and pleuro-pneumonia, from which others besides Lord Carrington may benefit; but, for all that, it has nothing to do with the merits

of the question. There has never been a case of pleuro-pneumonia in Canada, and although there was an outbreak of that disease some years ago in the United States, it was stamped out, and there has not been a case for years; and, as Mr. Cope, the late chief veterinary officer of the Board of Agriculture, and all veterinary scientists declare it a disease that can only be transmitted by healthy cattle inhaling the breath of diseased animals, it is impossible that Canadian cattle, which are healthy and have not been in contact with animals suffering from pleuro-pneumonia, can infect British cattle.—PATRICK L. GRAY.

ANTS' NESTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

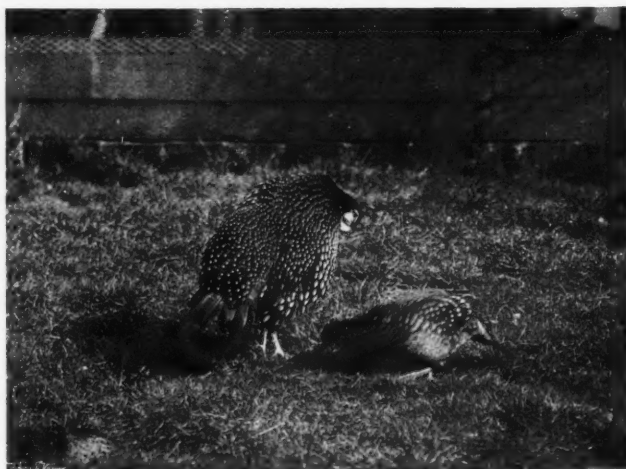
SIR,—Till one of these structures has been seen it is almost incredible to hear of nests being piled up by the large black ants to a height of 3ft. 6in., and which cover an area of many square yards; yet visitors to the Fairy Glade on Canford Cliffs, near Bournemouth, some years ago will know that these figures are within, not over, the mark of truth, and in the Devonshire woods round Lustleigh many a one can be studied in the building. The material is stick (or pine needles as in the accompanying photograph), and if it is considered how many of these little bits go to a cubic foot some idea will be gained of the proverbial industry of the strong little creatures who carry, drag, and push "beams" many

times their own weight considerable distances. Woe be to slowworm or any other living thing that crosses the boundaries of their castle. He is speedily attacked, and dies what must be an extremely painful death. Also it is unwise to choose such a neighbourhood for *al fresco* lunches. *Verbum sap.*—E. N.

TEMMINCK'S TRAGOPAN (TRAGOPAN TEMMINCKI).

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photographs represent that beautiful and rare tree pheasant, Temminck's tragopan. In the first one the cock bird is seen by himself, and in the second "playing" round the plain-coloured hen. It is difficult to describe in words the plumage of the gorgeously-attired male. Roughly, he may be described as of a bright chestnut red, spotted with white, and with different shades of golden orange on the head and neck. Large patches of bare skin, rugose and wattled, on each side near the eyes, are of a most lovely light blue tint in colour. Very little appears to be known of the habits of any of the tragopans in a wild state. They come from certain parts of China and one or two other localities. They are forest birds, shy and skulking in their habits, and spend a good part of their time sitting in the thickest part of the trees and bushes. In confinement they make their nests, as they do in the wild state, in trees and bushes, generally choosing an old wood-pigeon's nest, at heights varying from 5ft. to 30ft. from the ground. They relapse the old nests with fine dead twigs, and also add a few small green sprays or leaves of the tree that the nest happens to be in—in most cases these have been in yew and spruce. Three eggs appear to be the usual clutch, but four have been laid. These are large for the size of the bird, and very similar, both in size and colour, to the eggs of the capercaillie; but the freckles are small in size, and uniform, and so numerous as to nearly cover the ground colour. As sporting birds, the probability is that they would be useless, merely flying from tree to tree. One very interesting feature about these curious and beautiful birds is that they have an intermediate, or eclipse, stage of plumage. Though somewhat difficult to manage at first, when once they have become thoroughly acclimatised they are fairly easy birds to keep. They become absolutely tame and fearless, and a very great ornament to any aviary.—OXLEY GRABHAM.



COCK PLAYING ROUND HEN.